Rock 'n' Roll
RAND COOPER

COMMONWEAL

A Review of Religion, Politics, and Culture

October 20, 2000

Is There a Religious Vote?

David Leege

St. Charles Seminary Library
Carthagena, Ohio

How Should Catholics Vote?

Mary Jo Bane • George Weigel • Eugene McCarraher

'Dominus Iesus'

Theologians Respond

$2.50 US
($3.50 CAN)

**********3-DIGIT 458
007997200 12/28/00
ST CHARLES LIBRARY
ST CHARLES SEMINARY
2860 US ROUTE 127 S 299
CARTHAGENA OH 45822-9599

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ANNOUNCING COMMONWEAL'S

$2,000 Prize Essay Contest for Younger Writers

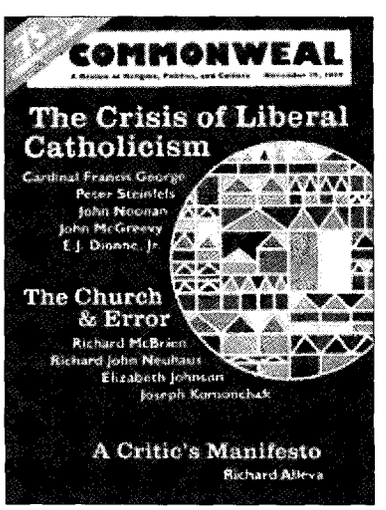
"Being Catholic in Contemporary America"

Commonweal magazine offers a prize of $2,000 for the best 3,000-word essay on the general subject "Being Catholic in Contemporary America." What are the tensions and the opportunities entailed in being a Catholic in America? How does the church help or hinder you in integrating your faith with your culture, politics, imagination? The winning essay will be published in *Commonweal*. The contest is open to Catholics, 27 years old and under. Here's how to enter:

- All entries must be submitted by February 28, 2001 to "Essay Contest," *Commonweal*, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 405, New York, NY 10115.
- All entries must be typed, double-spaced, on single sides of standard-size paper or sent via e-mail to commonweal@msn.com.
- The winner will be announced and the $2,000 prize awarded on May 1, 2001. The winning essay will be published in the September 14, 2001 issue.
- Entries will not be returned.
- *Commonweal* may request for publication, at its usual rates of payment, essays submitted in this contest that are not awarded the prize.

Since 1924, *Commonweal* has exposed readers to theological currents on religious freedom, the role of the laity, and liturgical reform, and has provided insightful, balanced discussions of controversial topics such as abortion, euthanasia, health-care rationing, military interventions, and the future of Catholic higher education.

Commonweal: a biweekly review of public affairs, religion, literature, arts, and the media.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FOUNDED 1924

COMMONWEAL

October 20, 2000 / Volume CXXVII, Number 18

UPFRONT

Correspondence *My friend Ed Skillin* 4

Editorial *Debatable politics* 5
Hard pill to swallow 6

Et cetera *Guess who's back* 7

COLUMNISTS

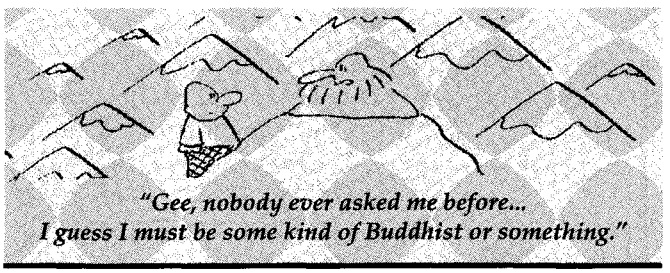
Israel & the Palestinians
William Pfaff 7

Too much, too soon, too often
Jo McGowan
It's easier raising kids in India. 8

SHORT TAKES

Is it killing?
M. Therese Lysaught
Separating conjoined twins 9

Rome & relativism
Commentary on Dominus Iesus*:*
Martin E. Marty 12
Robert P. Imbelli 13
Philip Kennedy 14



"Gee, nobody ever asked me before...
I guess I must be some kind of Buddhist or something."

ARTICLES

DIVINING THE ELECTORATE
David C. Leege
Religion & politics, 2000 16

YOU CATHOLIC?
HERE'S HOW TO VOTE
Mary Jo Bane 19
George Weigel 20
Eugene McCarraher 22

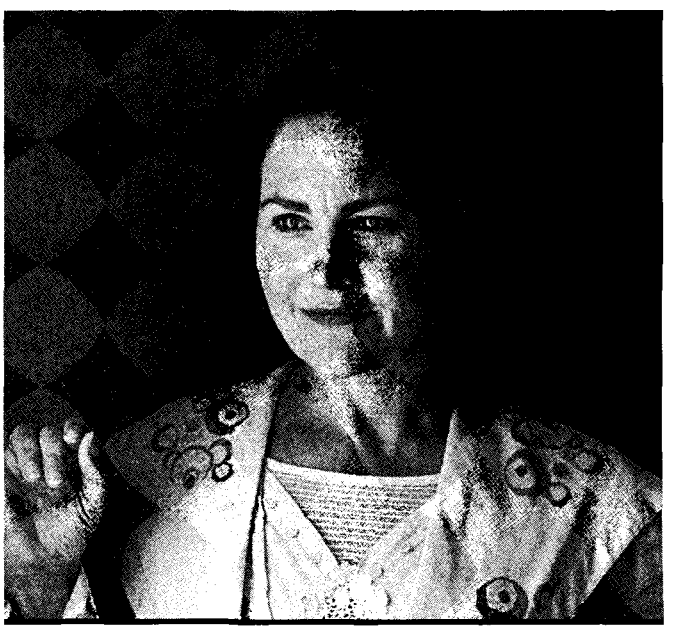
VERDICTS

SCREEN

Almost Famous
Rand Richards Cooper
The thrill of rock 'n' roll without the pain 23

MEDIA

We have good books, too
Celia Wren
'Masterpiece Theatre' faces west 25



Cherry Jones as an imperious Iowan.

BOOKS

Working-Class New York
by Joshua B. Freeman
Bruce Nelson 26

Oscar Romero
by María López Vigil
Patrick Jordan 28

THE LAST WORD

Joe Lieberman's orthodoxy & ours
Maurice Timothy Reidy 31

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

To the Editors

My friend Ed

With everybody writing about Ed Skillin [September 8], I think I owe it to his memory to add a footnote or two.

It was my privilege (and that of my late wife Dottie) to know and count as dear friend for nearly half a century this profoundly but also lightheartedly Christian gentleman. For me, Ed helped to make sense of that too rarely cited tag end of Thomas's definition of our species, *Animal rationale et risibile*. I can still see Ed in his living room handing around the pre-dinner goodies, but also droll servings of ideas amid easy, modest, self-deprecating chuckles. Ed Skillin could do more with a circumflex than most of us can with paragraphs. And I don't mean just the expressive eyebrows.

With sadness, this past summer it was my further rare privilege to visit Ed fairly often at the nursing home. Although deafer than duct tape, he would smile unforgettably (indulgently?) at my often-zany recitations of verse—delightful Jabberwocky, prescient Ulysses, apropos Burns's apology to a field mouse. But as we then prayed the signature decade that was my main reason for showing up, he would lower his eyes and, I hope, mind-meld along with me. The first time I saw him after his stroke, I sang "Yankee Doodle" to him, hoping by example to encourage at least the toehold on speech that singing can help the dysphasic regain. It didn't seem to help. Jane [Skillin] and their children, polite as ever, must have thought me crazy. But Ed seemed to enjoy the try at brightening his day.

What I never did while the family was there I take particular satisfaction from. At the end of our visit I would presume to take my layman's thumb and, in no sense as cleric manqué, with it make my baptismal Christian sign of the cross on the forehead of that wee but towering figure of our time—and, as far as I'm concerned, for all time.

Ed Skillin old friend, rest—as I'm sure you do—in the peace and joy of Christ.

JAMES C.G. CONNIFF
Upper Montclair, N.J.

When pigs fly

Thank you for the poem by Alfred Nicol ["Guinea Pig" September 22]. It is stunningly well written.

SALLY KURZDORFER
Alpine, Calif.

Yet more on Courage

Fathers Lloyd and Harvey are technically correct in saying that Courage does not "force" homosexual individuals into sexual-orientation change [Correspondence, September 8]. But the group's whole approach evidences a strong endorsement of and personal encouragement for reparative therapy: (1) the Courage brochure says it is wrong to say that "sexual-orientation change is never possible" and "for those who really want it, reparative growth is a possibility and happens regularly"; (2) the brochure also claims that one can leave behind not only the "homosexual lifestyle" but "the very feelings of same-sex attraction." While conversion therapy is an "option" for all, "teens and young adults are especially invited to consult competent therapists."

The program for Courage's annual gathering invariably features as speakers prominent representatives from the "ex-gay" movement touting the success of reparative therapy. Given Harvey's claim that homosexual orientation is "not the work of God" but "arrested sexual development," would anyone not want to do all that is humanly possible to "grow into" one's "true" heterosexual identity?

JOHN GALLAGHER
Mount Rainier, Md.

Chat with us on-line.
To subscribe, simply e-mail:
commonweal-subscribe@egroups.com

What did Acton mean?

Commonweal [Et cetera, July 14] was correct in questioning the *New York Times*'s choice of Richard Rorty to review Garry Wills's *Papal Sin*. It was a poor choice, particularly, if (as you stated) Wills, "America's most prominent Catholic intellectual writes a scathing indictment of his church." Everybody (Wills included) deserved better.

The aptness of *Commonweal*'s choice of Eamon Duffy as the reviewer [July 14] was reinforced by his solid rejoinder ["The Reviewer Replies," September 8] to Wills's dismissive comments on the review itself.

For the record, I read Wills's *Papal Sin* and it is a powerful work, but its merits are marred by its polemics. The book is one-sided in argument, caustic in tone, and historically incomplete.

Like Wills, Lord Acton is one of my "heroes." But a hostile critic, using Wills's approach, might question Acton's integrity by quoting from a letter he sent to Robert E. Lee on November 4, 1866. After praising Lee, his cause, and the Confederate Constitution, Acton wrote: "Therefore I deemed that you were fighting the battles of our liberty, our progress, and our civilization; and I mourn for the stake which was lost at Richmond more deeply than I rejoice over that which was saved at Waterloo."

Does this mean that Acton, whose great unfinished work was to be a history of liberty, supported slavery? If the Confederacy had survived, slavery, though diminished by war, would have continued. Was Acton being inconsistent? hypocritical? I think not. Such a judgment would lack balance. Even a hanging judge needs to put his evidence in perspective.

GEORGE L. MAHONEY
Katonah, N.Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

STAFF

Editor: **Margaret O'Brien Steinfels**
Executive Editor: **Paul Baumann**
Managing Editor: **Patrick Jordan**
Associate Editor: **Daria Donnelly**
Production Editor: **Tiina Aleman**
Senior Writer: **Robert G. Hoyt**
Editorial Assistant: **Grant Gallicho**
Copy Editor: **Susanne Washburn**
Business Manager: **Paul Q. Kane**
Poetry: **Rosemary Deen**
Screen: **Rand Richards Cooper**
Stage/Media: **Celia Wren**
Columnists: **Sidney Callahan, E.J. Dionne Jr., John Garvey, Jo McGowan, William Pfaff**
Circulation Manager: **Sandra Smith**
Administrative Assistant: **Quanda Williams**
Advertising Manager: **Ruth E. Taylor**

Commonweal, [ISSN 0010-3330] A Review of Public Affairs, Religion, Literature, and the Arts, is published biweekly except Christmas/New Year's; and monthly July and August, by Commonweal Foundation, 475 Riverside Drive, Rm. 405, New York, NY 10115. Telephone: (212) 662-4200. E-mail: commonweal@msn.com. Web: http://www.commonwealmagazine.org. Toll-free: 888-495-6755. Fax: (212) 662-4183. Display advertising correspondence should be sent to Ruth E. Taylor, 11 Graffam Rd., So. Portland, ME 04106 (207) 799-4387, classified advertising correspondence to 475 Riverside Dr. POSTMASTER: send address changes to Commonweal, 475 Riverside Dr., Room 405, New York, NY 10115.

Commonweal is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Catholic Periodical Index, Index of American Periodical Verse, Book Review Digest, and Book Review Index. Microfilm from Vol. 1, 1924, to current issues available through University Microfilm, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and on Microfiche from Bell & Howell, Wooster, OH 44691. *Commonweal* articles are also available at many libraries and research facilities on CD-ROM and in electronic data bases. Serials Data program No.: ISSN 0010-3330. Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional offices. Copyright © 2000 Commonweal Foundation. *Single Copy*, $2.50. Yearly subscriptions, U.S., $44; Canada, $47; foreign, $50. Special two-year rate: U.S. $75; Canada, $81; foreign, $87. Annual rates for air-mail delivery outside U.S.: Western Hemisphere, $84; Europe, $89; other parts of the world, $99. All Canadian and foreign subscriptions must be paid in U.S. dollars by International Money Order or by check on a U.S. bank.

Illustrations: Cover design & art: Christopher Young; pp. 3, 16, 22, Baloo, Rothco; p. 3, ©ALT Films/Bob Greene; p. 8, Ray, Rothco; pp. 10, 12, 14, Charlot; p. 18, Matt, Rothco; p. 19, Valerry; p. 20, Engleman, Rothco; p. 24, Neal Preston; p. 26, Ross, Rothco; p. 28, Religious News Service Photo; columnist portraits, Elaine Mills.

http://www.commonwealmagazine.org

Debatable politics

The first of the three presidential debates (October 3) between Vice President Al Gore and Texas Governor George W. Bush was as lacking in drama and clarifying disagreement as it was in humor. In short, a bore. Each candidate was carefully scripted, with both men determined to avoid launching the sort of personal attack that undecided voters appear to find objectionable. The artificiality of the situation was highlighted by the October 5 vice-presidential debate between Senator Joseph Lieberman and former Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney. Cheney and Lieberman seemed effortless where Gore and Bush were most mannered, and the calm and deliberative way in which the two older men laid out their differences made Gore and Bush look like not-ready-for-prime-time players.

As we go to press, the presidential candidates are about to debate a second time. The format for this exchange of views will be more informal, with greater opportunity to question each other directly. Bush thinks the setting will favor his more relaxed and likable personality. Gore hopes Bush's frail grasp of policy details will become evident during cross-examination. However, thanks to the lackluster first encounter, the second debate (October 11) is likely to draw an even smaller television audience and have less of an impact on the race. Although some event or statement can still change the dynamic of the election, it is likely that each man will continue to guard against making mistakes instead of taking risks to win over voters.

Still, the first face-to-face meeting between Gore and Bush did illuminate basic differences. How to allocate the next ten years' projected budget surpluses is the question facing the nation—at least it is the most pressing question the candidates think is facing the nation. Bush emphasizes the traditional Republican demand for less government and lower taxes, arguing that now is the time to return money ($1.3 trillion) to taxpayers and to partially privatize Social Security and Medicare. Gore, in turn, rejects privatization, arguing that government must guarantee these entitlement programs. The money Bush would devote to tax cuts, Gore says, should be used to shore up the Social Security fund and expand Medicare coverage.

Similarly, Bush contends that Gore's proposals will enlarge government, establish expensive new programs, and result either in large deficits or higher taxes or both. Gore insists that Bush's tax cut disproportionately favors only the wealthiest 1 percent of taxpayers. Each man charges the other with playing fast and loose with the numbers. The consensus among experts is that Bush's math is the more suspect. More important, however, is the fact that both candidates base their proposals on the very shaky assumption that enormous budget surpluses are to be counted on. An economic slowdown will quickly make this entire debate moot, and that possibility lends an air of unreality to the candidates' promises.

How voters respond to the overall demeanor of each man is the subject of widespread speculation. Bush's relative composure and articulateness may have laid to rest some concerns about whether or not he is "up to the job." Still, his command of the issues was hardly masterly, and he was unsure of himself in discussing

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

foreign policy and, surprisingly, on the Supreme Court and abortion. Gore was surefooted, but came across as long-winded and pedantic. He has also been accused of mugging for the cameras and stretching the truth in the anecdotal stories he told. Voters looking for a level of comfort with Gore's personality still need to be wooed.

Both candidates fudge on difficult issues. Take abortion. In many swing states abortion is a crucial, if muted, factor, especially among undecided women voters. Bush's evasive answers about abortion understandably alarmed his pro-life supporters. But his dilemma is clear enough: the Republican Party's antichoice stance is an obstacle to attracting undecided (mostly) women voters. Consequently, Bush went out of his way to indicate that he was not an extremist who would make overturning *Roe* v. *Wade* a high priority, and explicitly condemned only partial-birth abortion. Then, seeing an opportunity to maximize his advantage, Gore, like Clinton before him, disingenuously touted his own opposition to the procedure, saying he would sign a bill banning partial-birth abortion provided it made exceptions for the life or health of the mother. The health exception, of course, makes any prospective ban meaningless. Gore's stated objection to one form of abortion does raise an interesting question, however. Gore endlessly boasts that unlike Bush, he supports "a woman's right to choose." But if he is willing to ban partial-birth abortion under certain circumstances, he cannot logically support "a woman's right to choose" in all cases. Someone should ask Gore why he doesn't support a healthy woman's right to choose partial-birth abortion. Shouldn't all abortion decisions be a woman's alone? Or could it be that there is something at stake other than a woman's right to choose in late-term abortions?

An answer to a question like that might make the final weeks of this election campaign worthy of the public's attention.

HARD PILL TO SWALLOW

During last month's media fanfare surrounding FDA approval of the abortion pill, RU-486, Planned Parenthood president Gloria Feldt reported that women in the clinical trials said such medical abortions felt more natural than surgical ones: These women "feel more in charge, more in control of their personal health," Feldt says (*New York Times*, September 29).

Does this bit of rhetoric show any interest in addressing the issues of control that bring women to abortion? No. Does it accurately reflect what women said in clinical trials? No again. In fact, some were distressed by the experience: initially there is intense cramping, and then nine-to-sixteen days of bleeding; above all, women were shocked at seeing the sac, the placenta, and, in more developed pregnancies (the approved RU-486 cut-off limit is seven weeks), hints of human form.

Among women who had a prior surgical abortion, reports were mixed. Some preferred the RU-486-induced abortion because it felt less invasive than the surgical one: there were no instruments or noise from the suction machine. One of the women did express puzzlement at the use of the word natural, however: "Natural? That is baffling to me. To me it seems incredibly unnatural."

Some of those who preferred surgical abortion did so on pragmatic grounds: a surgical abortion requires one trip to the doctor as opposed to three; and it is over in a few hours. For some, there was a clear cognitive difference between the two methods, "you really confront what you are doing [with RU-486]. It was a little overwhelming to see. If you have any doubts about having an abortion, I think it would be difficult. With the surgical method, you lie there and it's done."

European statistics support this ambivalent reaction: In Sweden and in France, where RU-486 has been used for a decade, fewer then one-quarter of abortion-seeking women ask for the drug. In Britain, 93 percent of women who have had a medical abortion say they would do so again. But only 6 percent actually choose RU-486. In none of these countries has the advent of the drug increased the overall number of abortions.

If Gloria Feldt's sloganeering glosses over some of these difficult realities, The National Right to Life Committee's attack on RU-486 as unsafe for women is equally unconvincing. Such abortions may or may not be more difficult for women, but they certainly appear to be safe.

Will RU-486 change the American abortion landscape? That is hard to predict.

Anecdotal and statistical evidence suggests that, as in Europe, surgical abortion will remain the prevalent choice. While it was initially expected that more doctors in the United States would be willing to provide RU-486 abortions than perform surgical abortion, a Pittsburgh doctor training his colleagues in the use of the drug, reports that initial interest drops rapidly when doctors learn of FDA requirements about its use: the number of patient visits along with state rules about abortion registration, fetal tissue disposal, and even the technical design of doctors' offices.

What has changed, since the RU-486 clinical trials began, is that abortion clinics, as a result of new techniques, have been providing vacuum abortions earlier than seven weeks. Could it be that RU-486 has and will continue to bring pressure on those who provide and those who seek abortions to do so at earlier and earlier dates? That would bring abortion providers in line with the majority view in the United States that later abortions are more morally repellent than earlier ones.

And abortion seekers? They certainly need support in gaining a stronger sense of control, before they get pregnant. How to achieve that requires a fuller and more honest public conversation—about personal responsibility, birth control, the long-term effects of abortion, family policy, and sexual politics—than we have heard thus far.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ET CETERA

Guess Who's Back ■ The headlines: "WE'VE NEVER BEEN BUSIER, SAYS OFFICIAL CHURCH EXORCIST"; "EXORCISTS FIGHT VATICAN TO KEEP HOLD OF SATAN"; "EXORCIST POPE 'CASTS OUT DEMONS' IN THE VATICAN." And they are not from the *National Enquirer*, but London's *Independent*, *Sunday Times*, and *Times*.

The Italian newspaper *Il Messaggero* reports that on September 6, the pope performed an impromptu exorcism on a nineteen-year-old girl in Saint Peter's Square. Bishop Gianni Danzi, secretary general of Vatican City, "realized who was inside the girl" because she was "screaming insults in a cavernous voice" in Italian and "unknown languages." He promptly notified the pope's personal secretary. Witnesses say that the girl displayed "superhuman strength" even after Vatican staff attempted to subdue her. When the pope turned his attention to the young woman, he prayed over her, exorcised her, and stayed with her for half an hour. The results were inconclusive. It was John Paul II's third exorcism in his twenty-two years as pontiff.

This is all fairly ominous, especially since the 1973 hit, *The Exorcist*, was rereleased on September 22 to packed theaters. What's going on here?

Exorcism, of course, is an ancient church practice. Jesus himself cast out demons. However, the church, especially since Vatican II, has recognized that much of what once passed for demonic possession had psychological or physical origins. Skepticism about the alleged physical manifestations of the devil is the rule for Catholics. Or at least it should be.

But in the aftermath of the pope's actions, the media have been filled with interviews with busy priest exorcists. Father Gabriel Amorth, seventy-four, president of the International Association of Exorcists, is frequently quoted. Amorth claims to have exorcised more than three thousand people over the past fifteen years. "The devil is real, he exists," Amorth says. "Satan is strong enough to possess ten thousand people at the same time all over the world."

This hardly sounds like skepticism. Nor does skepticism seem reflected in the decision of the Archdiocese of Chicago, though an official exorcism has never been performed there, to appoint its first full-time exorcist. Is there something going on in Chicago that we don't know about? Or does the need for an exorcist have more to do with the condition of the Chicago Bulls since Michael Jordan's retirement?

OF SEVERAL MINDS

WILLIAM PFAFF

ISRAEL & THE PALESTINIANS

Peace process flawed from the start

The American approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has rested on four assumptions.

The first is that people in the end will be reasonable. Even if they don't want to be reasonable, the cost of unreasonableness will compel them to accept reason.

The second is that small steps are best because they accustom people to change, make it seem less threatening, acquaint antagonists with one another, and lead enemies to act like friends. This follows from the American practice of personalizing international relationships. The aim has been to have the ex-general Ehud Barak and the former political terrorist Yasser Arafat dine at one another's homes, come out afterward and clap one another on the back, talking about my friend Yasser and my friend Ehud. This actually happened shortly before the recent outbreak of violence, some of the worst in the history of Israeli-Palestinian relations. Then Barak appeared on Israeli television, shaking hands with Ariel Sharon.

The third assumption, related to the second, is that security steps and confidence building come first. Only when reliable security arrangements exist between the two sides will they be willing to move on to the heart of their disagreement.

The final assumption is that it is useful to postpone the essential disagreements, since addressing them provokes emotional and "irrational" responses. Good personal relations and agreement at the security level, on the other hand, may allow fundamental problems to solve themselves.

All four assumptions have proved to be wrong.

Arafat is weak, depends on U.S. sponsorship in the peace talks, and must rely on the United States to work out a settlement acceptable to the Palestinians and the Arab world. He has had to compromise, to be "reasonable." His only leverage is street violence, and violence may escape his control.

Prime Minister Barak has not had to be very reasonable. He now is politically weak (a paradoxical incentive to preemptive compromises), but his country is the most powerful in the region, and its support from the United States is unshakable. Vice-presidential candidate Joseph Lieberman said after the Democratic convention that his firm public commitment to Israel was no obstacle to his election since the United States itself is pro-Israel. Neither Barak nor Arafat has any doubt about that.

When President Bill Clinton's latest Camp David talks failed to produce a settlement, the White House spin was that Barak had gone as far as he could on Jerusalem's status, and that since Arafat wouldn't accept his offer, Arafat was responsible for the failure. It was equally true, however, that Arafat had gone as far as he could on Jerusalem's status. He is accountable for the Islam-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ic holy places to all of the Islamic nations, including his principal sponsors, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco. What Jews call the Temple Mount is what Muslims consider the sacred enclosure of Haram al Sharif.

That is why Sharon's visit to the contested area, meant to affirm Israel's sovereignty over it, proved such a provocation. It was meant to provoke, to undercut any concessions Barak might offer. The essential political question—the status of Jerusalem—has thus far been impossible to resolve. Several agreements on secondary issues have nonetheless been held as useful substitutions for the resolution of the ultimate problems. "Final-status" problems would be talked about another day. This is not an unreasonable strategy in negotiations. It has not worked in the Israeli-Palestinian case because there is no agreement at all if the status of Jerusalem is not settled.

At an emergency meeting in Paris on October 4, convoked by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Americans and Israelis insisted on security agreements to stop the violence. Arafat walked out because the others would not agree to an international commission to investigate the cause of the crisis. While Barak accused him of responsibility for the violence, Arafat was able to exploit international reprobation of Israel for once again using lethal rifle fire and rockets from gunships against rock-throwing civilians. What advantage the Israeli authorities see in these measures remains a mystery. They inevitably provoke even larger and more violent demonstrations, and certainly do not intimidate the Palestinians. Friends of Israel should acquaint its leaders with the methods of European riot police, and the advantages, over killing demonstrators, of water cannons, baton charges, and new U.S.-developed crowd-incapacitating agents.

On Norwegian initiative and under American sponsorship, Palestinians and Israelis have spent nearly a decade in negotiations leading up to what now is the crucial problem, the status of Jerusalem—site of the holy places of all three great monotheistic religions. Everything has been negotiated and tentatively solved except that. As the claims made on Jerusalem by the two sides rest on religious conviction, they are ultimately nonnegotiable, "unreasonable."

Neither side has proven willing to yield sovereignty over the holy places, or share it, or renounce it in favor of an international authority. Until that can be agreed, nothing has really been solved. That is what Palestinians and Israelis have discovered during the recent violence. □

© 2000, Los Angeles Times Syndicate

OF SEVERAL MINDS

JO McGOWAN

TOO MUCH, TOO SOON, TOO OFTEN

Raising children in America

I have lived in India for twenty years. On each return visit to see my family in the United States, I feel as if I am seeing America for the first time. During my trip this summer, accompanied by my three very nice children—ages sixteen, thirteen, and ten—I had an uncomfortable epiphany. My children might not be so nice had I brought them up here.

This is not to say that nice children don't exist in the United States. They certainly do. But their parents seem to work much harder at it than I do. In India, nice children are a dime a dozen, and parents receive no special credit or praise for their children's behavior. Why should they? At least half the work is done by the culture.

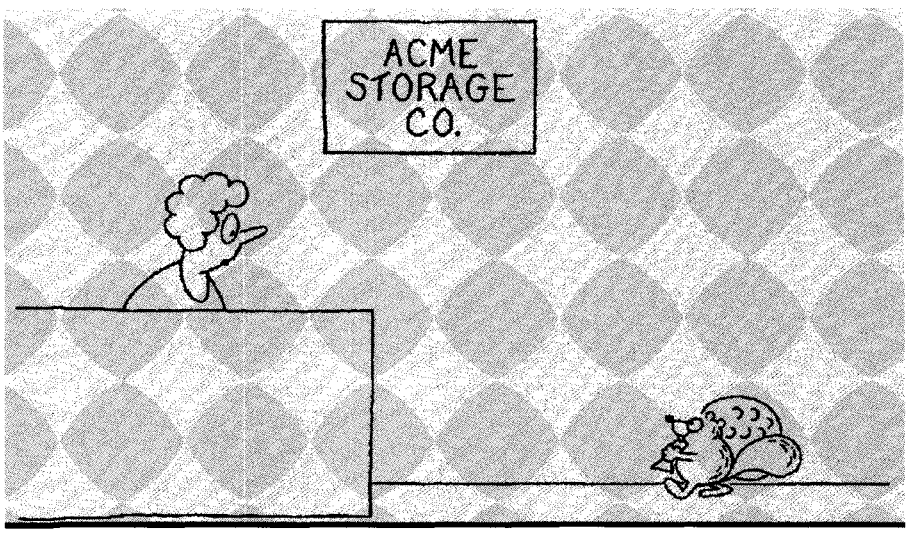
American parents spend so much time either keeping the culture at bay or working actively to counteract its effect on their children. I'm not sure I would have the necessary energy.

India is a poor country in some ways and the things that Americans take for granted (like electricity, for one) do not exist in many places. But, as my husband loves to tell our children, "nothing comes without a price." The abundance Americans enjoy comes at a very high cost.

This trip, I noticed three things that embody the aspects of American culture which make raising nice children particularly difficult.

Too many choices. This cherished American principle leaves people dissatisfied and restless. "Should I really have ordered a shot of hazelnut? Would vanilla have been better?" "I'm listening to this radio station, but maybe that one is playing a song I would like more."

In India, until very recently, there was only one TV channel for the entire country. The choice was between on and off. The people who chose to watch did so



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with rapt attention, laughing with delight and crying real tears. Those who chose not to knew exactly what they were missing and preferred to be doing something else.

In India, there are no half sizes for shoes. If you fall in-between, you either take the smaller and suffer pinched toes or the larger and wear two pairs of socks. If you want coffee, you get instant. Sugar is sugar (no artificial sweeteners), milk is milk (in some places you can choose between cow's and buffalo's, but variations in percent of fat are unknown).

Having too many choices not only defeats the objective of providing each of us with a neater fit but it inflates our sense of self-importance. This cannot but carry over into other aspects of life. Having been trained to "have it your way" in the matter of burgers, learning styles, and modes of payment, is it any wonder that our children expect us to drop whatever we are doing to attend to their needs whenever these happen to occur? Egocentric behavior is typical of children around the world. Most cultures gently but firmly discourage it.

Portions that are too large. Every time I return to the United States, soft drinks have doubled in size. Free refills (of cups which are already gigantic) are a standard feature in restaurants. French fries are cold before you can finish half of them. Wholesale grocery stores are full of people laying in supplies of cat food, toilet paper, and dishwashing liquid as if Armageddon were just around the corner.

In India, when we take the children out for dinner, we usually order soft drinks "two into three," meaning two 300-milliliter bottles served into three glasses. If we go for ice cream afterwards, our single scoop is about one-third the size of a typical cone in the States. A quart of ice cream in India is called a "party pack."

A child who literally cannot finish her ice cream without feeling sick gets less pleasure from the experience than the one who lingers over the last bite, wishing there were just a little bit more. The idea that more (much more) is better persuades children that they are entitled to whatever they desire. But isn't the secret to treats limiting them?

Too many distractions. A few weeks ago, I was in a U.S. airport waiting for my very delayed flight to depart. All around me, I watched people who were not there. Seventy-five percent were speaking on cell phones. Others were watching a television news show which had, in addition to the newscaster, the weather displayed in one corner of the screen, stock market reports across the bottom, and sport results flashing regularly across the top.

The average American can do all of these things simultaneously: drive, talk on the phone, drink coffee, eat a bagel, listen to music, and smoke a cigarette. In India, most people do one thing at a time. Maybe they could do more, but they don't. This gives their lives a stillness, a mindfulness, rarely seen in the United States.

While I do recognize that it is precisely this American versatility and energy that make life in this country so vibrant (it can get pretty boring in a small Indian town!), it may not be the best thing for raising children, who are, after all, the world's original conservatives. Much as we may hate to admit it, to a baby there is nothing boring about the same old mother or father putting her to bed every night, over and over in exactly the same way.

The distractions which are an inherent part of life in America make it seem that we are never accomplishing all that we can. There is always some other activity we could add to the one we are engaged in to make it more productive and efficient. Children give us the fleeting chance to recognize the fallacy of this belief, but even the parenting industry (Music in the womb! Teach your two-year-old to read!) makes it easy to miss.

Fewer choices, smaller sizes, one or two things at a time. It may not be everyone's prescription for happy children and calm, relaxed parents, but it works in India. □

M. Therese Lysaught

IS IT KILLING?

Jodie, Mary & God

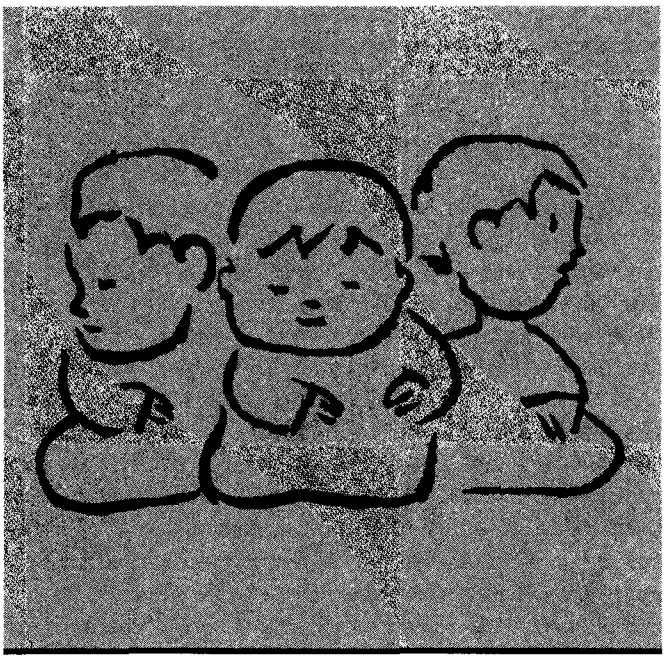
"We cannot kill one of our daughters to allow the other to survive. We believe nature should take its course. If it's God's will that both of our children should not survive, then so be it. It's not something we believe we have the right to interfere with."

So wrote the parents of the pseudonymous conjoined twins, Jodie and Mary, in their petition to the British Court of Appeal. Physicians in the case had sued to surgically separate the twins, born August 8. The parents—Roman Catholics—initially opposed the surgery. Separation would result immediately in Mary's death, since she relies on Jodie's heart and lungs for her blood and oxygen supply. But if not separated, the strain on Jodie's heart will ultimately kill them both.

The court's September 22 decision to permit the physicians to proceed with the surgery did little to clarify the moral terrain. The parents, it appears at this time, have decided not to appeal the ruling. This outcome only solidified the case's more troubling aspects.

To begin, consider how the various participants have been characterized in the court and the media. The heroes, clearly, are the judges. It is they who bear the terrible burden of moral decision, they who have been agonizing through sleepless nights about what ought to be done. The physicians emerge as clear-eyed, single-minded knights, simply seeking to do the right thing. The parents, on the other hand, are "devout Roman Catholics," "simple-minded peasants" from a "remote European community" (now revealed to be Gozo, an island near Malta). The subtext paints the parents as backward, their geographic isolation and rural communal

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



life reinforcing their archaic religious scruples. The fact that the tragedy of the case affects the parents and not the judges or the physicians seems to have been lost.

The children are likewise juxtaposed. Jodie is consistently described as "bright and alert." Mary, on the other hand, is assailed by a range of metaphors. She is "passive," "deformed," "pathetic," a "congenital tumor," her existence "utterly futile." In the chilling words of the recent court decision, she is a "parasite" that "sucks the lifeblood of Jodie." Such language has but one purpose—to dehumanize. It is always easier to take the life of a creature that is less-than-human.

What troubles me about this case? The "facts," as reported, change daily. Initially, Mary was simply described as "passive." With each subsequent report, her physical handicaps become more extensive. Initially, Jodie's odds of surviving the surgery and leading a "normal" life were cast as high as 80 to 90 percent. But this sort of surgery is extremely rare and extremely high risk; the prognoses seem unduly optimistic. And we hear later that if she does survive, even with multiple surgeries over a period of years, her ability to walk, control her bladder, or have children may be permanently impaired. Initially, the girls were given a maximum of three to six months to live. Physicians later consulted for a second opinion suggested that both girls might live conjoined for "many months, even a few years." Initially, the parents were reported to refuse the surgery on "religious grounds," citing "God's will" as the basis for the impossibility of choosing between the girls. Later reports, however, suggest that the parents would rather not raise a handicapped child. A handicapped Jodie would be shunned in their community, they maintain, and adequate medical care is not available. Reports from the community itself, however, seem to refute both assertions.

Regarding cases like this, then, caution is in order. It is difficult not to be persuaded by metaphors that mask the absence of argument and that attempt to minimize ambiguity by diminishing or eliminating the moral status of those involved. From the parents' perspective, the story would likely sound very differently. Who gets to tell the story? When "facts" are fluid, adequate moral analysis is impossible.

What further troubles me about this case is that the classic framework of the Catholic moral tradition—the principle of double effect—does not provide clear-cut guidance. In this particular instance, commentators on both sides argue from stricter and looser interpretations of the principle. How might one work through it? We would begin with the object or moral species of the act in question. Is the action properly characterized as "killing" Mary or rather as saving Jodie's life? A charitable reading suggests the latter.

What is the act itself? Is the act itself good or morally neutral? The act seems properly described as a surgical intervention to separate conjoined twins. In the absence of tragic physiology, surgical separation would certainly be the medical recommendation. And Jodie's medical situation seems to call for it, making it a therapeutic intervention. Thus, it seems fair to characterize it as a good or neutral action.

But Mary would die. The Catholic tradition allows for situations where death is the unintended and unavoidable outcome of a medical procedure designed to save a life. But would such reasoning apply in this case? Without a doubt, Mary's death is not intended, desired, or willed (the dehumanizing remarks above notwithstanding). Without a doubt, the saving of Jodie's life combined with Mary's grim prospects for life expectancy provide a sufficiently grave reason.

But though it seems unfair to describe the situation as "killing Mary in order to save Jodie," or doing an evil in order to achieve a good, one troubling question remains: Would Mary's death be the cause of the good outcome? If so, the surgery would be illicit. This proviso is important, especially if the new prognosis with regard to the girls' life expectancy together is correct. More time may change the situation. In the course of time, an alternate course of action, without the same moral onus, might appear.

However, at this time the closest analogy, although an imperfect one, might be the analogy of the ectopic pregnancy. Traditional moral analysis permits physicians to perform a surgical procedure designed to remedy a lethal pathology—a fallopian tube that would inevitably hemorrhage. Physicians would not be permitted, however, to simply open the tube, kill the fetus, and remove it. Does this analogy hold here? Does the surgical separation differ from a direct attack upon Mary that would simply end her life? Yes, but the uncertainty of the prognosis weakens the analogy.

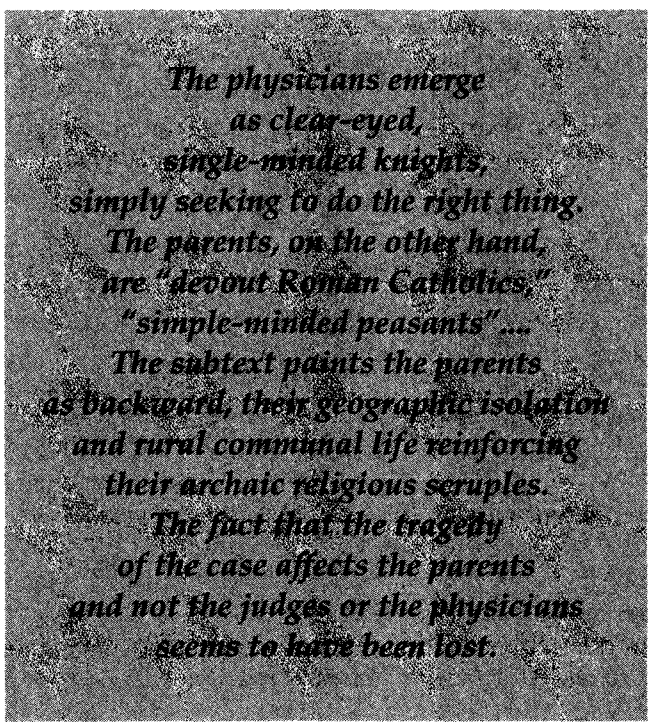
In the end, we do not have enough similar cases to develop a "more probable" answer. The situation remains unique. Although the medical literature now boasts a handful of cases involving the separation of conjoined twins, they differ in relevant particulars (the nature of the join, the wishes of the parents and physicians, the medical prognoses for the two children, the outcomes, etc.). There is no substantial

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

body of moral opinion from which to draw. In such cases, one could—after careful and prayerful deliberation—be justified in proceeding.

Another matter that troubles me about this case is the use of the term "God's will." The parents find God's will in the given, in the course that nature takes. Lord Justice Ward, one of the three judges considering the appeal, follows suit: "It was not God's will that [Mary] should live because [she] wasn't born with the capacity to live and death is inevitable." Troubling indeed is the picture of God these diverse statements render and what they imply about human life as made in the image of God.

The God conjured here is a sovereign God, omnipotent, perhaps capricious from our perspective, certainly inscrutable. God's will is not our will, nor God's ways our ways. He (sorry, but this is definitely not God as Mother) has his own good reasons for his actions, which are beyond our ability to see or understand. Such a God is remote, the sort of God who gathers souls to his heavenly bosom in his own good time. It is a God who acts "immediately," one who intervenes in the world in an unmediated fashion. God's will is known not only through nature in its flourishing and perfection (à la Thomas Aquinas) but in its inevitable imperfections as well.


The physicians emerge
as clear-eyed,
single-minded knights,
simply seeking to do the right thing.
The parents, on the other hand,
are "devout Roman Catholics,"
"simple-minded peasants"...
The subtext paints the parents
as backward, their geographic isolation
and rural communal life reinforcing
their archaic religious scruples.
The fact that the tragedy
of the case affects the parents
and not the judges or the physicians
seems to have been lost.

Though Job and Calvin might recognize this God, the Catholic tradition ought not—or would at least ask for a fuller account. In the Catholic tradition, God is an incarnate God whose will is not entirely unknowable. Scripture, tradition, liturgy, and nature all attest that God is a creative God who wills life. God heals, creates community, attends the outcast, suffers, redeems humanity from death, and promises the eschatological renewal of all creation, giving hope. God wills healing, wholeness, life, relief from suffering, and special care—a preferential option, if you will—for the vulnerable and marginalized. God does not will death.

We are images of God, and we are called to follow, to work to realize in the world God's will for healing, wholeness, life, relief from suffering, refusing to abandon the outcast. We are not called to wait passively for God to intervene miraculously, nor are we simply to read God's will from "whatever happens."

Rereading God's will in this way would lend support to the argument for proceeding with the surgery. While Mary will inevitably die either way, Jodie's death does not seem as inevitable. As God wills healing, flourishing, and life for Jodie, we are called to do likewise. The parties to the case ought to do all that they can to heal Jodie and promote her life. Living as a conjoined twin is not a physiologically ideal state. Surgical separation seems the action most directly designed to promote healing and life.

But this is not to say that the parents are wrong. Mary may be less than whole; God's will for life, healing, and wholeness cannot be achieved for her, but God will not abandon her. The parties to the case must likewise embody God's presence to Mary and resist descriptions that dehumanize. Such descriptions fail to embody God's will to be present to those who suffer, not to abandon those who cannot be cured, to walk with the most vulnerable, even if it is in their dying.

Which leads us to the last troubling aspect of the case. Although I have built a case for justifying the surgery, such a case would only permit; it would not necessarily oblige. God, indeed, would not will that the parents kill one of their daughters so that the other might survive. God would not will that they abandon one for the good of the other. If this is how the parents understand their situation, then they have no choice but to oppose the surgery. In conscience, they could not do otherwise.

Perhaps I empathize too much with the parents. While my own moral and theological reflection leads me to agree that the surgery could be permitted, and may even be the right thing to do, the utilitarian reasoning of the physicians and the courts, as well as the manipulative rhetoric employed, makes me want to champion the parents' case. I want to defend the vulnerable against the powerful. Or perhaps it is the presence of the two babies in my own womb, kicking, rolling, and growing toward their estimated date of arrival in December. If faced with a similar situation, would I be able to engage in the sort of analysis outlined above, or would my deepest religious instincts find it all to be sophistry? Would I be able to choose between my children? I do not know. But I do know that in a case as morally complex and ambiguous as this, a decision made in good conscience by grieving parents ought to be respected by the courts. □

M. Therese Lysaught *is an assistant professor in the department of religious studies at the University of Dayton.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ROME & RELATIVISM

'Dominus Iesus' & the CDF

On September 5, the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) released the declaration Dominus Iesus: On the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church. *The statement restated and reaffirmed the church's understanding of the unique revelation of Jesus Christ and the Catholic church's status as the ultimate guardian of that revelation. In judging other Christian churches inadequate and other religions "gravely deficient," the declaration seemed to revert to a triumphalistic language not used by Rome since before Vatican II. Ecumenical dialogue partners have raised questions about the meaning of* Dominus Iesus, *while many Catholics worry that it is yet another effort to quash theological exploration, especially among theologians engaged in dialogue with Eastern religions and those writing on the question of religious pluralism generally.* Commonweal *asked three theologians, two Catholic and one Protestant, to assess* Dominus Iesus. *Their evaluations follow.*

Martin E. Marty

We are the oldest. We are the mother and you are the daughters, daughters who "suffer from defects." So says today's Rome.

We are the best. When it comes to salvation, you are at best half-safe. Thus the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

We are the only. The rest of you Christians, though individually often our brothers and sisters, are not even members of "churches in the proper sense."

Those claims condensed the document *Dominus Iesus* in most Catholic and public media, and evidently in public perceptions, after the Vatican announced its position on non-Catholic faith, churches, and religions on September 5.

If the intent was to reclaim absolutes and fight off relativism, whether among Catholic theologians and the faithful or among others who thought they were as old as, as good as, and as faithful in sharing salvific work as Catholics can be, *Dominus Iesus* is likely to produce ironically opposite outcomes.

The relativizing game of comparison began at once.

No, said the Eastern Orthodox, in some rage: you are the upstarts. We are the bearers of tradition. We are The Tradition.

No, said the Anglicans, in frustrated and aggrieved tones; we are partners in God's saving work, as you had come to tell us in recent decades.

No, said the Protestants, some of whom, like the Baptists, have always said we were here first, and we are inerrant and best and only.

No, say the other religions, none of whom had ever pretended to be the same as Catholicism, but who had been schooled to think of themselves as benign outsiders and profoundly well-intended dialogue partners by Rome.

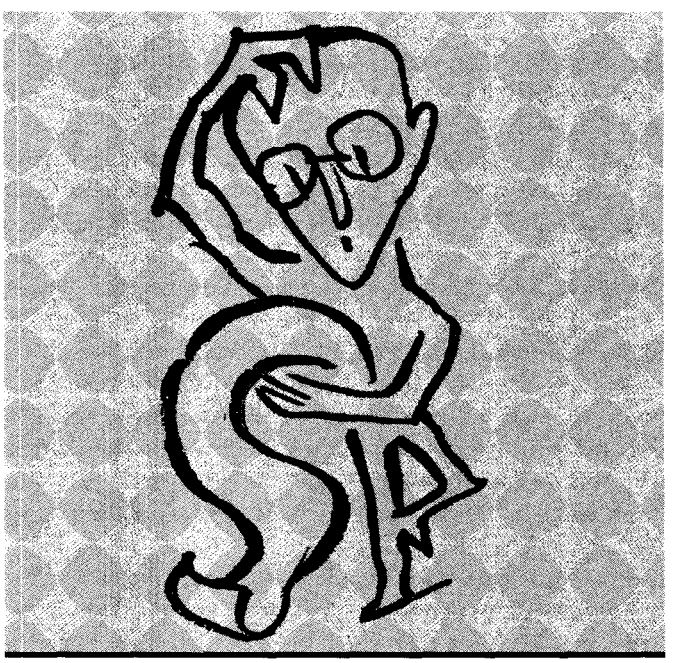
Interesting, say the media and the bystanding public: You Christians can fight all you want, but you'll only amuse and bemuse us in your contests and conflicts over unsettleable issues.

Regrettable, say some of us who see in *Dominus Iesus* a missed opportunity. Catholic theologians in the East, with Asian spiritual environments in mind, were working to relate the truth in Christ to the light in the East. They were no doubt making some mistakes—how is a non-Catholic to adjudicate?—as they fumbled their way tentatively into new relations, but now they are to cut off efforts. Catholic theologians in the West, many of them trying to formulate "theologies of pluralism" to face urgent and confusing new realities here, were taken to the woodshed and in effect told to cease and desist.

So instead of having an intellectually vibrant encounter among Catholic thinkers and with others, many see a reversion to pre-Vatican II declarations. At Vatican II other Christian churches could be regarded as "brothers" and thus, presumably, also as "sisters," as Pope Paul VI also sometimes called them and as John Paul II indicated in word and gesture. No longer. The other Christians have to be "daughters," and deviating or deviant ones at that.

Of course, ecumenical endeavor will not cease. Of course, dialogue with world religions can continue. But under the sign of regret.

Anyone who cares about the truth in Christ has good reason to fear relativism in an age where in too many minds and mouths "we are all, after all, in different boats heading for the same shore"; a time when "it does not make any difference what you believe, as long as you believe"; a place where "spirituality" gets invented as a do-it-yourself alternative to churchly "religion." Yet *Dominus Iesus* gives very



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

few clues as to how to reason about the truth. Its claims have to do with authority.

Anyone who cares about spreading the truth in Christ, a.k.a. evangelism, and about dialogue among the religions, has to know that you can "give the store away" in dealings with other faiths on an open market. You can lose the impulse to invite others into the company of Christ. You can settle for cheap universalisms. Yet *Dominus Iesus* spends its time saying that Catholics cannot look for new formulations in a world wherein they cannot hide and where they do not do well simply to build walls.

Our shrunken world does not permit Rome or Geneva, Athens or Canterbury, Wittenberg or New York, to be sequestered, closed off, from other believers and nonbelievers.

How present is Jesus Christ in such a world? The authors of *Dominus Iesus* have this correct: Without clear, reflective, and empathic guidance, believers will be at sea, awash in tides of relativism. Or, conversely, they will react as fundamentalists do, building walls, creating barriers, and speaking ill of all who do not belong to their club. It would be unfair to call the new Vatican document simply exclusivist and fundamentalist, but in its polemical swing at Catholics who, Rome thinks, are indeed giving the store away, it has not contributed to clarity.

Since we in sister and brother churches do seek guidance, from Rome and elsewhere, and who hope also to be heard, *Dominus Iesus* inspires regret, not rage, for the missed opportunity it represents. Back to the drawing board. □

Martin E. Marty, *the Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus at the University of Chicago, has written extensively on ecumenism and interfaith relations. His newest book is* Education, Religion, and the Common Good *(Jossey-Bass).*

Robert P. Imbelli

On November 18, 1965, *Dei verbum* was promulgated by the Second Vatican Council. A remarkable, indeed, revolutionary document, it secured the church's acceptance of modern historical-critical methods of biblical exegesis. The rejection of the "traditionalist" preliminary draft of the constitution three years before had marked the effective beginning of Pope John's council and the beginning of the end of Tridentine Catholicism, with its undeniable beauties and banalities. *Dei verbum* was justly celebrated for recovering a more vibrant, personalist understanding of God's revelation, whose fullness is given in the person of Jesus Christ.

Yet, the robust Christocentrism of *Dei verbum*—indeed, of all the council's documents—now seems to evoke embarrassment in certain "progressive" theological and missionary circles. In the thirty-five years since Vatican II, there has been frequent appeal to the "hierarchy of truths." At one time or other the claim is put forward that birth control or even papal infallibility does not "rank high" in that hierarchy. Fair enough. But if the doctrine of the unique

Among some Catholic theologians, there is advanced the idea of "multiple incarnations" of the Christ, or that Jesus is Savior only for Christians, or that the salvific role of the Spirit is more universal than that of Jesus Christ, or that Trinity is but one "model" for speaking of the incomprehensible mystery of God.

Incarnation of Jesus Christ and the doctrine of the Trinity that flows from that confession of faith do not form the apex of the hierarchy of truths, then there is no such thing.

It seems to me that a concern for securing that definitive article of faith forms the context in which to understand *Dominus Iesus*, the recent controversial declaration from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF). Though the tone of the document is peremptory and its ecclesiological teaching raises legitimate questions, I shall limit myself to the Christological teaching because the profession of faith in Jesus Christ constitutes the heart of the matter. In that light, it is important to note that the declaration is directed not to ecumenical dialogue partners, nor to all people of good will, but to the bishops of the Catholic church, to be communicated especially to theological faculties and missionary congregations, as well as to the Catholic faithful. It intends to recapitulate the church's faith in the uniqueness and universal salvific significance of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God: the article of faith upon which the church itself stands or falls. What is crucially important about this document is that this article of faith, everywhere professed and presumed by Vatican II, can no longer be taken for granted.

Put bluntly: There is abroad a measure of innocent and sometimes quite intentional apostasy. Among some Catholic theologians, there is advanced the idea of "multiple incarnations" of the Christ, or that Jesus is Savior only for Christians, or that the salvific role of the Spirit is more universal than that of Jesus Christ, or that Trinity is but one "model" for speaking of the incomprehensible mystery of God. Such "unitarianism of the Spirit" is no figment of some overheated Roman imagination. It appears in print, both at popular and more sophisticated theological levels. If the church's magisterium cannot authoritatively declare that such is not "the faith delivered once and for all to the saints" (Jude 3), then there is no legitimate role for the magisterium. It is simply otiose.

The CDF document does not mount a theological argument but sets forth a profession of faith, drawing in particular upon the New Testament, the documents of Vatican II,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and the papal magisterium of John Paul II. It is of utmost significance that the first citation is taken from the creed of the Council of Constantinople in its original articulation (without the later Western addition of the "*filioque*"): the common Trinitarian faith of the undivided church. Thus the declaration is "dogmatic," not in the invidious sense of arbitrary or unenlightened; but in the precise sense of what ultimately binds believers and constitutes their identity as Catholic Christians.

Also significant is that *Dei verbum* is often quoted and everywhere presupposed. *Dominus Iesus*' ample citations from Vatican II do not represent an exercise in proof-texting, but an exercise of spiritual discernment, re-echoing the Christo-logic of the council in a new context in which it can no longer, alas, be taken for granted. The declaration's much criticized insistence on the universal significance of the salvation offered through Christ is not a retreat from ecumenical dialogue or tolerance. It only reiterates the very first words of *Lumen gentium*, which confesses that Christ is "the light of all peoples" and that all are called to union with Christ. Hence the council's recognition that God's grace is operative outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic church in no way lessens the missionary imperative to "preach the gospel to every creature."

Similarly, the council's epoch-making *Nostra aetate* explicitly professes both respect and evangelical responsibility—both mandated by its Christocentric vision. It states (in a passage several times referred to by the recent declaration): "The Catholic church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions....Yet she proclaims, and is duty bound to proclaim without fail, Christ who is the way, the truth, and the life (Jn 14:6). In him, in whom God reconciled all things to himself (2 Cor 5:18-19), men and women find the fullness of religious life."

Moreover, the equally celebrated *Dignitatis humanae* (also quoted by the declaration) affirms this same tensive both/and. It certainly acknowledges the right of men and women to be free from coercion in fulfilling their duty to worship God. At the same time, *Dignitatis humanae* "professes its belief that God himself has made known to the human race the way in which men and women are to serve him, and thus be saved in Christ and come to blessedness." *Gaudium et spes*, which many believe to be the most distinctively original of the council's documents, also proclaims, as it must, this Christological vision and faith.

Clearly, Christological normativity, the uniqueness and salvific universality of Jesus Christ, was not invented by the current CDF. It is simply the doctrine of the faith. *Dominus Iesus*' reaffirmation of this faith does not preclude further theological investigation. Indeed, the declaration several times encourages precisely such reflection (see numbers 14 and 21). But such theological exploration must be faithful to the dogmatic content of revelation, if it is truly to be theology: faith seeking understanding.

In the statement, "Called to Be Catholic," that launched Cardinal Joseph Bernardin's Common Ground Initiative, we read: "Jesus Christ, present in Scripture and sacrament, is central to all that we do; he must always be the measure and not what is measured." *Dominus Iesus* could not have said it better. □

The Reverend Robert P. Imbelli, *a priest of the Archdiocese of New York and a frequent* Commonweal *contributor, teaches Catholic theology at Boston College.*

Philip Kennedy

Here is a sobering thought. There is no Christian alive today who agrees with every belief of all other Christians. Contemporary Christianity is marked by a ubiquitous plurality of tenets and customs. It also stands alongside a host of other world religions. Ours is an age of far-reaching devotional multiformity. Manifest religious variety within Christianity and among religions is currently troubling the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. To countercheck the view that pluralism is tolerable or inevitable, the CDF published a declaration *Dominus Iesus* ("The Lord Jesus"). It is a rhetorically somber though theologically questionable document. It is not an irrevocable text for Catholics of the Roman rite because it fails to represent fully the profoundest teaching of Vatican II concerning divine salvation and the religions of the world.

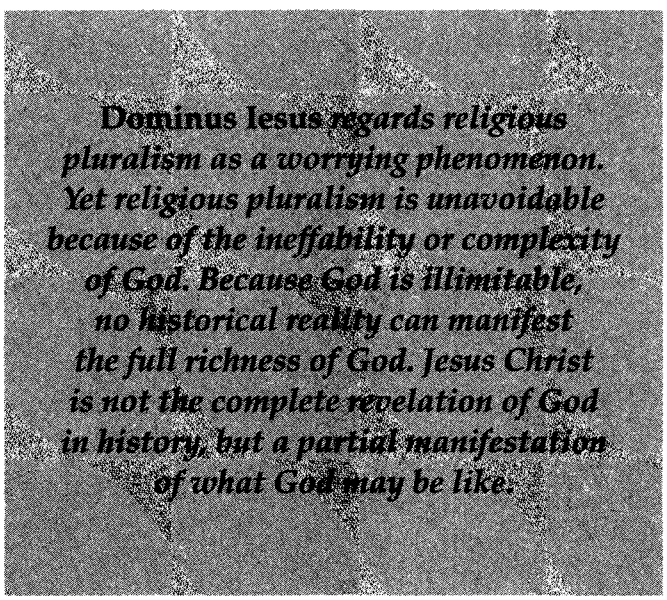
At base, *Dominus Iesus* struggles with the most taxing of all theological questions: How and where might human beings chance upon a saving God in their world? Its answer is emphatically clear: God is best encountered in the Catholic church founded by Jesus Christ.

This new declaration is a relatively brief text. It rejects the view that the ultimate mystery of God has been revealed to human beings in a variety of historical figures apart from Christ. It insists that the fullness of divine revelation is manifest in Christ. It instructs that God saves in only one way,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which is through Christ. It rejects as contrary to Catholic faith theories of God's saving action beyond the unique mediation of Christ. Having asserted Christianity as superior to other religions, the declaration comments on the Catholic church's relation to other Christian denominations. It repeats a foundational explanation of Catholic origins deployed in a host of recent Vatican texts concerning ministry and the church. According to that theory, Christ established a church which stands in historical continuity with the current Catholic church. Bishops today are thought to be the successors of the Apostles. Therefore, churches or ecclesial communities that are not currently in communion with apostolically constituted Catholic Christianity are defective.

Dominus Iesus is a forceful text, yet it is far from convincing. It is devoid of humble penitence and fails to acknowledge the sins and defects of the Catholic church that betray the reality and memory of Christ. But the contemporary hierarchically constituted Catholic church is unable to regard itself as directly historically continuous with the ministry of Jesus Christ because he did not establish a church with bishops and diocesan structures to break away from Judaism. Rather, he preached the kingdom of God to rejuvenate Israel's religious life and enlisted the help of twelve primary Apostles in his mission to Israel. The church evolved over time after his death and in response to him.


Dominus Iesus regards religious pluralism as a worrying phenomenon. Yet religious pluralism is unavoidable because of the ineffability or complexity of God. Because God is illimitable, no historical reality can manifest the full richness of God. Jesus Christ is not the complete revelation of God in history, but a partial manifestation of what God may be like.

Dominus Iesus styles itself as an authoritative teaching of the Catholic church's relation to other churches and religions. And so it is, but not more so than Vatican II. It defers to the council a full forty-five times. Even so, it fails conspicuously to repeat the council's single most revolutionary statement concerning divine salvation. That statement is, of course, section 16 of the constitution on the church, *Lumen gentium*, which solemnly teaches that "Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the gospel of Christ or his church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience—these too may attain eternal salvation." *Dominus Iesus* quotes *Lumen gentium* 15 and 17, but perpexingly overlooks section 16. Its authors, no doubt, have no intention of insisting that salvation is entirely unavailable outside the church, but *Lumen gentium* 16 is too historically momentous to be passed over in silence.

Section 16 is the most radical turnabout in ecumenical relations for five and one-half centuries. It is a stark counterpoint to the dogmatic teaching of the Council of Florence-Ferrara (1442), which insisted that hell fire is the destiny of those who are not received into the Catholic church before their life's end.

In short, *Dominus Iesus* is something of a setback in Catholic teaching rather than an advance. Apart from neglecting *Lumen gentium* 16, the declaration overlooks that religious pluralism is not a regrettable situation to be overcome, but an unavoidable fact of reality. *Dominus Iesus* regards religious pluralism as a worrying phenomenon. Yet religious pluralism is unavoidable because of the ineffability or complexity of God. Because God is illimitable, no historical reality can manifest the full richness of God. Jesus Christ is not the complete revelation of God in history, but a partial manifestation of what God may be like. Since Jesus is not the unveiling of the fullness of God in the world, other religions may have their say about God's salvific nature. Even according to classical dogmatic theology, Jesus Christ is the enfleshment in history of the Second Person of the Trinity. The fullness of the Trinity is not incarnate in Jesus. Consequently, there is more to God, so to speak, than has been shown in Jesus Christ. God remains a *Deus absconditus*, a God who always escapes human attempts to picture God.

Oddly, *Dominus Iesus* seems to slight some world religions apart from Christianity. It makes a distinction between theological faith and belief. While theological faith is proper to the church, other religions merely enjoy belief (nos. 4 to 7). Yet Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are all Abrahamic religions by definition. Christians, like Jews and Muslims, believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Therefore, the faith of Jews and Muslims is properly theological because it is given to God. While Christians espouse a Trinitarian understanding of God, wherein the Second Person is the incarnation of a passionate Logos unto death, their God nonetheless remains the God of Abraham.

The Catholic church of the Roman rite is one community where God might be espied. It may be better than many other signs of divine redemption. It is unable, however, to control God and is therefore not the only possible nexus for divine-human encounters. There is no place on this planet where God is unable to draw close to human beings, and no situation in which people are incapable of glimpsing God's reality. □

Philip Kennedy, O.P., *teaches theology at the University of Oxford.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DIVINING THE ELECTORATE

Is there a religious vote?

David C. Leege

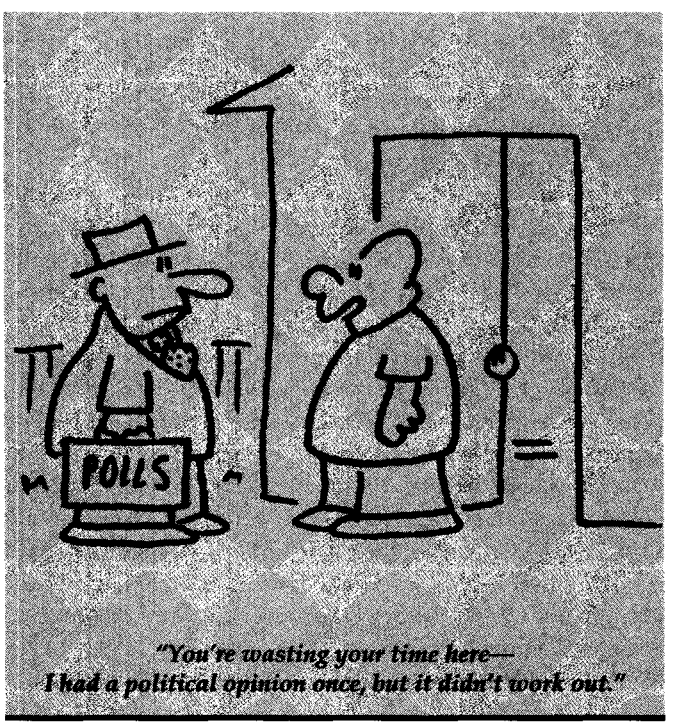
Is there a religious vote? The answer is complex and ambiguous. First of all, politicians think there is a religious vote and that, in close elections, they must cater to it. Second, each party is currently in the process of abandoning the extremes—for Republicans the "culture wars," for Democrats, permissiveness—that appeal to some religious or irreligious groups and repel others. Third, voter data suggest that faith-based voting occurs only at the margins of American elections. However, faith-based voting is central for some religious groups: African American Christians since the sixties and white Evangelical Protestants more recently. Finally, a creedal basis for voting is difficult to sustain in the United States where office-seekers use (and abuse) religious symbols, where civil religion remains the dominant form of political religion, where economic well-being, perhaps even greed, motivates voters more than their moral and religious beliefs, and where intergroup conflicts lie fallow only for short periods of time. It has never been easy to be a consistent Christian in American politics.

Some of the complexities of this issue can be seen in a brief look at the "Catholic vote" over the last four decades. And when we examine the voting preferences of African Americans, Evangelicals, and Mainstream Protestants, further complexities can be demonstrated.

We are told that 1980 was the fulcrum election, that people of faith, especially Catholics, were drawn to Ronald Reagan because of his promise to outlaw abortion, his staunch anticommunism, his family values, and his support for moral character. Yet, considering his flip-flop on abortion from prochoice as governor to prolife as a presidential candidate, the reality of his family(ies) life, his playfulness with truth, and his aversion to churchgoing, Reagan was a morally ambiguous figure. Contrast him to his opponent Jimmy Carter, a born-again Southern Baptist, a Sunday school teacher, and brother to a prominent faith healer. President Carter had fashioned a peace initiative at Camp David anchored in prayer, reading, and discussion of sacred Scriptures, and mutual respect for the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions. By most objective standards, Carter was the more "religious" person. Reagan, however, could speak persuasively about religion-in-general. In the public mind, he had stood up to the infidels, the moral relativists, and traitors in Hollywood and Berkeley.

Reagan, in fact, did attract Catholic voters in 1980, although not as effectively as Richard Nixon had in 1972. Even more than Reagan, George Bush attracted Catholics in 1988, but lost them just as abruptly in 1992. Nixon, Reagan, and Bush also attracted Evangelical Protestants from the Democrats. And over the decades Evangelicals have replaced Mainline Protestants as the dominant religious tradition at the core of the Republican Party. All of this makes it sound as if we have witnessed in recent decades a religious influence in national electoral politics unparalleled in our history.

In fact, religion has probably been overrated as a factor before the 1990s. While religion did mobilize previous nonvoters, and did rationalize the realignment of many Southern white Evangelicals and some Catholics, it was not as strong a factor as economics, race, or American patriotism. In fact, Republicans suffered backdoor losses as early as Goldwater when economic and cultural conservatives took over the



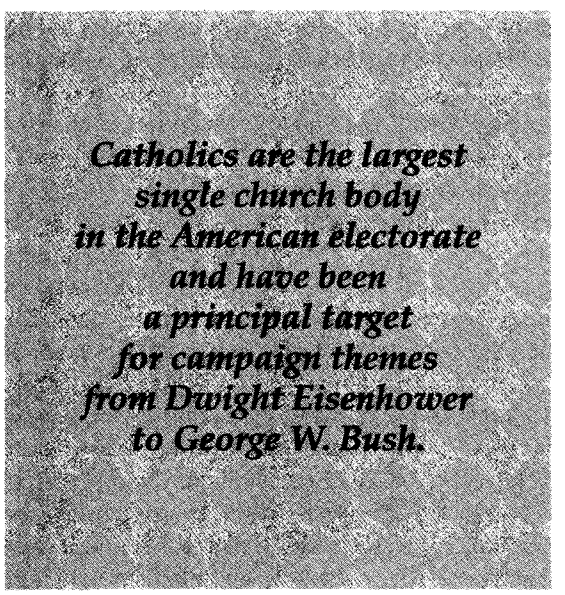
"You're wasting your time here—
I had a political opinion once, but it didn't work out."

David C. Leege *is professor of government and director of the Program for Research on Religion, Church, and Society at the University of Notre Dame. Together with Kenneth Wald, Brian Krueger, and Paul Mueller, he is the author of a forthcoming book on* The Politics of Cultural Differences.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

party. As we shall see, Mainline Protestants and highly educated Republicans thought their party had abandoned its heritage of advancing opportunity for minorities and women and was catering too much to the Religious Right. That is why Governor George W. Bush has positioned himself at the moral center—in favor of religion-in-general, character, compassion, opportunity for all, and tolerance. And not surprisingly, Vice President Al Gore checkmated that strategy by selecting Senator Joseph Lieberman, a running mate who is not afraid to speak for religious values in the public square. Nor, for that matter, is Gore.

Each party has a different task during a national election. Throughout the post-New Deal period, Democrats, as the majority party, have had to encourage higher turnout, stressing economic and social insurance issues and trying to mute advantages the Republicans held on traditional moral-order issues (race, foreign relations, gender, etc.). Republicans, as the minority party, have had to shrink the size of the electorate or generate defections among Democrats. The post-New Deal period began with Catholics, Evangelical Protestants, and Jews in the core of the Democratic coalition, Mainline Protestants in the core of the Republican Party, and African American Christians split between the two parties (or not voting at all). A large part of the campaign strategies over the last forty years have involved appeals to these religious traditions in an effort either to draw them to the other party or get them to sit out the election. This year, for example, the Republicans formed a Catholic task force to court Catholic swing voters who are attracted to the party's moral-restoration agenda, emphasizing issues such as opposition to gay rights, sex and violence in the media, and the decline of character in high office. Whether the Republicans will succeed in attracting Catholic voters for these reasons is uncertain. Let's examine the last four decades group by group.


Catholics are the largest single church body in the American electorate and have been a principal target for campaign themes from Dwight Eisenhower to George W. Bush.

African Americans If they could vote at all, African Americans long voted Republican—the party of Abraham Lincoln. During the civil rights era, African American churches increasingly stressed the relationship of religious themes to social and economic justice. Throughout this period, no group matched the religious involvement of blacks. This was the first religious group to make a wholesale shift to one party, in this case, to the Democrats in 1964. The black churches stimulated political participation well beyond what a socioeconomic model would predict. With federal guarantees in place, they got out the vote. Recently, African Americans have resisted efforts of the Christian Coalition to tap into their cultural conservatism and bring them back to the Republican Party. Blacks have kept social-justice concerns paramount and remained loyal to the Democrats.

Evangelicals White Evangelical Protestants were the next group to make a wholesale shift. By every measure of moral restorationism—opposition to abortion, support for school prayer, opposition to civil rights for homosexuals, hesitance about women's roles outside the home, etc.—Evangelicals are the most culturally conservative religious group in the electorate. Antipathy toward the Catholic Kennedy affected their vote in 1960, but only since 1968 have they gradually favored the Republican Party. Given Evangelicals' cultural conservatism, we would expect the Republican appeal for moral restoration to explain their displeasure with Democrats and their shift to the Republican Party. But the facts are more ambiguous.

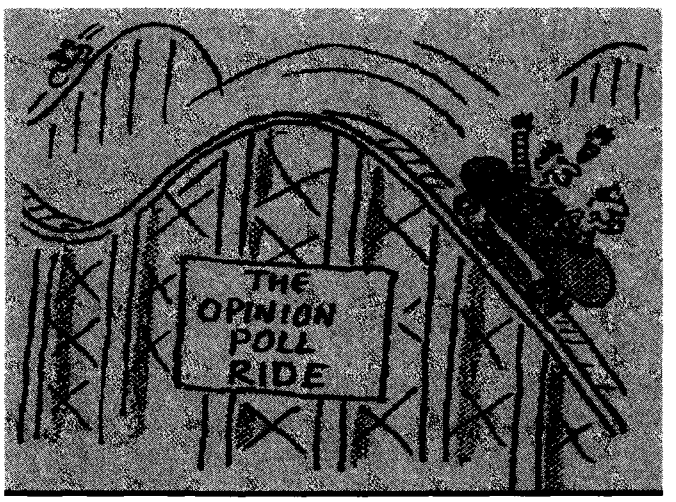
Although Senator Barry Goldwater made heavy use of moral restorationist themes in 1964, statistically significant shifts of Evangelicals to the Republican Party for these reasons do not occur until 1972. Why? White Evangelical opposition to federal civil-rights policies and negative feelings toward blacks outweighed their concerns over moral issues linked to gender, sexuality, or school prayer. In fact, from 1968 to 1988 almost the entire story of the white Evangelical shift from Democrats to Republicans is anchored in race and the role of the federal government in seeking to assure greater opportunity for minorities. After all, this was the basis of Nixon's famous "Southern Strategy." "Big government" became a racially charged code word, as did phrases like "liberal," "tax and spend," "welfare," "crime," "law and order," "gun control," and "local control of schools." (It is important to remember, of course, that racial and class conflicts are hard to disentangle.)

While the moral restorationist factor is modestly evident in our analyses of voting behavior throughout the 1970s and the Reagan years, it does not replace race as the central factor until 1992 and 1996. Only in the 1990s can we say unequivocally that a religious vote concerned with state-encouraged morality in our daily lives has dominated the political outlooks and behavior of white Evangelicals. This religious tradition, heavily anchored in the South but spreading throughout the country, kept its century-old animus to the federal government and attached it to race and social spending. Ever since Nixon, Evangelicals have found the Republican Party more hospitable than the Democratic Party.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mainline White Mainline Protestants—such as Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Congregationalists—have always been at the core of the Republican Party, and traditionally have been civic-minded and reformist in their political impulses. Their modest movement toward the Democratic Party mirrors those factors that attracted white Evangelical Protestants to the Republicans. In 1964, Mainliners resented the takeover of the party by Goldwater conservatives. In fact, Republican defections over race and women were a far greater cause of Goldwater's defeat than was fear of his strident anticommunism ("Extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice"). In Nixon's 1972 victory over George McGovern, there also is substantial defection to the Democrats by white Mainline Republicans who are committed to change on race and gender issues. Such defections to the Democrats over Republican racial policies continued until 1992. Many Mainliners reject their party's use of code words to heighten racial differences. They are also the first religious group to take notice of the moral-restorationist themes deployed during the Reagan years. This becomes the dominant reason some vote Democratic from 1980 until 1996 (with the exception of 1988 when the use of the Willie Horton ad made race dominant again). Although white Mainline Protestants have remained Republican, they have become unreliable coalition partners. Bush's use of themes about religion-in-general, inclusiveness, tolerance, and equal opportunity at the Philadelphia Republican convention were certainly addressed to Mainliners in the old core of the party.

Catholics Finally, let's look at white (non-Hispanic) Catholics. There are two important things to remember about Catholics as a potential religious vote. First, Catholics are the largest single church body in the American electorate and have been a principal target for campaign themes from Dwight Eisenhower to George W. Bush. Second, forty years ago Catholics had the highest church attendance levels of any religious tradition, but this has changed. Today Catholics over age fifty display the high level of attendance that characterizes Evangelicals. Catholics below fifty have the infrequent attendance patterns of Mainline Protestants. This means that younger Catholics are less often exposed to sacramental rites and social teachings. Younger men attend Mass less frequently and are predominantly Republican, economically conservative, and culturally liberal. Younger women attend Mass slightly more frequently than younger men and are predominantly Democratic; they are slightly more liberal, both economically and culturally. The largest gender gap of any religious group opened up in the 1990s among younger Catholics. Their elders continue to look a lot more like each other: they attend Mass quite regularly, are economically liberal and somewhat more conservative culturally. Given these differences and divisions, is there any basis for thinking that a "religious vote" exists among Catholics? Or that this year's Republican effort to woo Catholics on moral and cultural issues will work?



It is not clear that moral-restorationist issues dramatically affect the way Catholics vote. Race, for example, has had a much stronger impact on voting patterns. From 1968 to 1992, racially charged issues were far and away the dominant reason why white Catholics left the Democratic Party. Catholics are generally more willing than other religious groups to use the government to resolve problems of equal opportunity. They also show more warmth toward minorities and the poor. Still, many of those Catholics who moved to the Republicans showed less receptiveness to government action and less warmth toward minorities and the poor. Only in 1996, after four years of the Clintons, does the cluster of issues and group feelings that constitute a moral restorationist program significantly push Catholics in a Republican direction. And here it is the generation of Mass-attending women over fifty.

Furthermore, when we examine a set of four characteristics that signal deeper identification with the Catholic community—frequent Mass attendance, the importance of religion in daily life, feeling close to other Catholics, and the interaction of the first two—we find a religious impact with some regularity on two issues: opposition to abortion and opposition to the death penalty. These are both human-life issues where the church has offered clear proscriptive teaching.

On the other hand, when prescriptive teachings about social justice, equal opportunity, and a preferential option for the poor are involved, those who have a deeper identification with the Catholic community show greater ambiguity. For the most part, being Catholic or even being a good Catholic predicts little about a person's views about social justice and government programs. Finally, the depth of identification with the Catholic community also predicts very little about warmth toward minorities or the poor. The only exception is among older Catholic women. This is also the segment of the church that is slightly more favorable toward government involvement in social support and equal opportunity programs. Thus, this sector of Catholic voters is likely to feel cross-pressured in 2000.

The analysis of survey data about the role religion plays in voter behavior does not allow us to draw any simple lessons.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Campaign rhetoric may articulate a principled theme and voters may embrace it. At the same time, voters also may respond to less principled subthemes voiced by politicians to take advantage of fears or of racial and gender stereotypes. "States' rights" can mean democratic responsiveness from a unit of government closer to the people. But to some whites it also means that no federal court order "will force my child to attend a predominantly black school." To some, "local control of schools" and "school vouchers" are practical ways to reform education and provide an alternative for minorities trapped in terrible schools. To others it is assurance that teachers' unions led by women, Jews, and blacks, or "alternate family advocates" "will not get their hands on my child." For many who felt that the growth of big government threatened America's unique blend of democracy and republicanism, the reduction of taxes was the way to reduce that danger. However, as journalist Thomas Edsall has suggested, for many whites reducing taxes was a way to keep their hard earned dollars from being redistributed to indolent black hands. "Abolishing welfare as we know it" might be a principled way to reduce intergenerational dependence on government. However, for many Americans it was the way to remove a presumed financial incentive for black women to have babies out of wedlock. Do Catholics respond to principled appeals, or to stereotyping, or to a sense of relative deprivation? It is difficult to know. Certainly those white Catholics at the lower to middle rungs of the occupational ladder were in competition with African Americans for jobs, homes, and neighborhoods. Again, as with Evangelicals, it is important to remember that racial and class conflicts are hard to disentangle.

What we can conclude, however, is that historically racial symbols and code words were more powerful during the sixties, seventies, and eighties in drawing Catholics and Evangelicals to the Republican Party than appeals to patriotism or the moral restoration agenda. We can further conclude that the experiences of the 1980s and 1990s added fuel to partisan transitions. In the 1980s some Mainliners were already voting Democratic in reaction against the cultural themes Republican leaders were articulating. By the 1990s, Evangelicals had moved in droves to the Republicans because of their beliefs about the moral life. Very modest numbers of Catholics were moving to the Republicans because of these same issues.

We do not yet know whether the 1996 election will have initiated a religious-based political realignment that will see large number of Catholics follow Evangelicals into the Republican Party. Given the nature of the 2000 election campaign, it appears that the Republican nominee is aiming at Catholics and Mainline Protestants for whom religion is not a tight set of laws but a source of goodness. And it appears that the Democratic nominees are determined to contest that same terrain. Perhaps this is closer to what it means to be a good American than what it means to be a consistent Christian. □

YOU CATHOLIC?

Here's how to vote

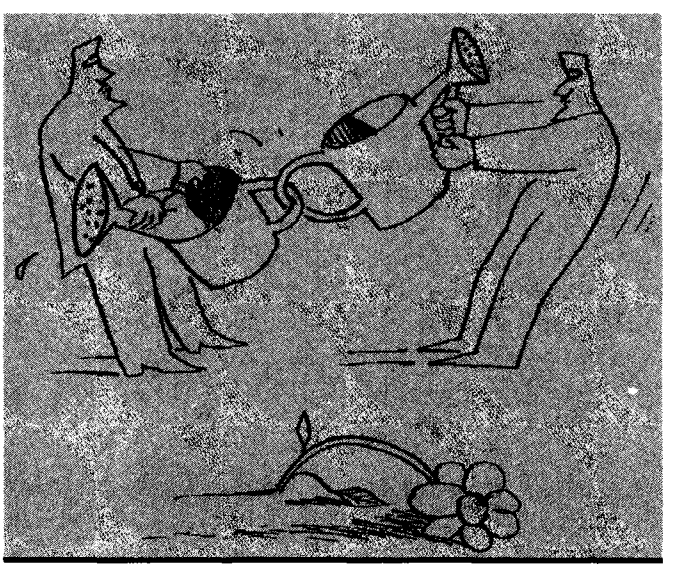
Mary Jo Bane

I would like to vote, this year or sometime, for a ticket and a party that is pro-life, pro-family, and pro-poor.

It's not clear to me why this formulation (which I was introduced to by the Reverend Eugene Rivers and political scientist John DiIulio) seems so odd to so many people. For me it follows from a commitment to the essential dignity and equality of every human person. It restates the very Catholic notion of a consistent ethic of life, which seeks to cherish and enhance, through both private and public action, life from its beginning to its end, but with due concern for the middle years as well. It takes its stand with the most vulnerable: the unborn, the dying, the young, the oppressed, the poor, and even the criminal.

As I have thought it through, being pro-life, pro-family, and pro-poor means neither idolizing the free market with its disregard for inequality, nor assuming that all problems are best solved by large federal spending programs. It means not assuming that everything that is sinful ought also to be criminal, but also not precluding the possibility of influencing or regulating moral behavior, for example on late-term abortions. And because democratic politics is the best mechanism we have yet invented for doing our public work this side of the kingdom, it means being committed to open, thoughtful, evidence-based deliberation.

Neither party meets my criteria. For someone (quoting here Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan) who was "baptized a Catholic but born a Democrat," this year's Democratic primary had some truly depressing moments. Watching Sena-



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tor Bill Bradley and Vice President Al Gore trade accusations about who, over the longest period of time, had been the most rabidly prochoice up to the last minute before delivery, or about who might, for one moment, have secretly harbored a positive thought about school vouchers, did not warm my heart. Nor am I inspired by what are now the positions of both parties on the death penalty. Or on campaign financing.

Nonetheless, I will vote for Gore-Lieberman. This choice is no doubt partly a matter of simple lethargy: I have never voted for a Republican presidential candidate since my first vote, for Lyndon Johnson in 1964.

But there is more to it than that. The country is in an era of unparalleled prosperity and the planet is in a period of unparalleled global integration. At the same time, the gap between rich and poor in this country, in terms of material well-being, is almost as great as it has ever been. Life expectancies for some groups of African Americans are as low as in the poorest countries of the world. And the gap between rich and poor countries is shockingly large, and appears to be growing. In much of sub-Saharan Africa, and in some countries of the former Soviet Union, life expectancies are actually falling. One and one-half billion of our sisters and brothers on earth live below a poverty line—defined as one dollar per day per person. We cannot, in conscience, ignore these facts or disclaim responsibility.

The Democratic Party does not have solutions to these problems. The solutions are very hard, and there are no simple answers. I suppose it is because of what the Democratic Party has been and remains that I believe that Democrats are more likely to address these problems and work to solve them. It has been, and is still, more than the Republicans, the party of the working class, of ethnic minorities, of immigrants, of the struggling and the disenfranchised. It shows more appreciation of the interconnectedness of the world and more sense of responsibility for the developing world. It even, I would argue, shows more appreciation for the preciousness of life across the whole life cycle, especially for the lives of the very vulnerable.

It is hard, admittedly, to point to specific policy proposals that clearly reflect these concerns; Gore and Lieberman, like "the other side," are busily directing their attention to middle-class swing voters. But I believe that their approach to, for example, health insurance, Social Security, and tax cuts or lack thereof is considerably more likely to benefit those who need it most.

And perhaps, at some point, the Democratic Party (or some party) will recognize the logic and the potential popular appeal of an approach that, in conventional terms, is both more socially conservative and more economically progressive. I think of it as pro-life, pro-family and pro-poor, and I eagerly await an opportunity to vote for it. □

Mary Jo Bane *is the Thorton Bradshaw Professor of Public Policy and Management at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.*

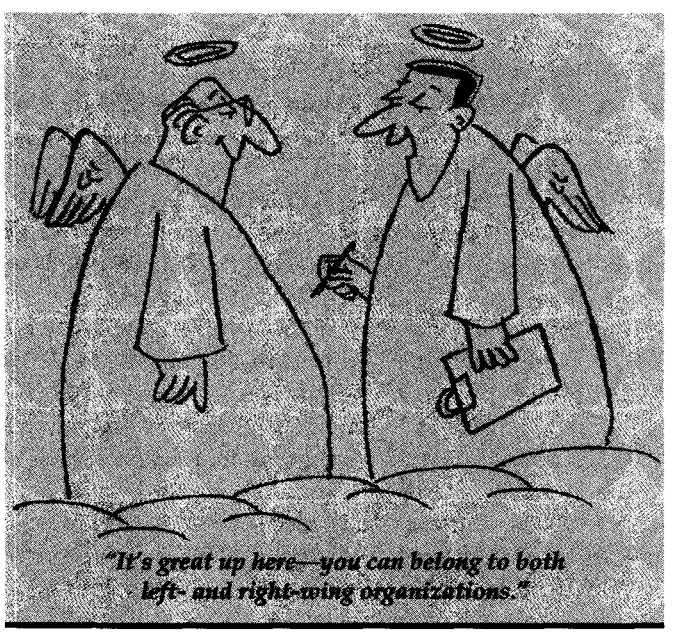
George Weigel

The restoration of honesty and honor to the presidency; no more presidential vetoes of federal bans on partial-birth abortion; cleansing the Augean stables of the Justice Department; a different U.S. approach to international population policy; prudent moves toward enhancing senior citizens' lives through a partial privatization of Social Security; health-care reform that doesn't turn the problem over to the guys who can't fix the potholes; education policies that rate parents' inalienable rights higher than the self-interest of the National Education Association; a new partnership with Mexico; an administration that understands that the armed forces are not primarily a laboratory for social engineering; a "Not for Rent" sign on the Lincoln Bedroom; a man at home with himself versus a man constantly reinventing himself (and concocting fairy tales in the process)—all of these strike me as persuasive reasons to vote for George W. Bush for president.

But the overriding reason is simply stated: the Supreme Court.

The next president will likely make three, perhaps four, Supreme Court nominations. Vice President Al Gore made clear in his acceptance speech, as he has throughout his campaign, that he has a stringent litmus test for Court nominees: any potential justice must be firmly committed to the notion that *Roe* v. *Wade* (with its companion case *Doe* v. *Bolton*) established a constitutionally protected regime of unrestricted abortion-on-demand—a regime recently reaffirmed in the most uncompromising terms by the *Stenberg* v. *Carhart* decision, which extended the mantle of constitutional protection to infanticide.

Should Gore make those three or four nominations and get his nominees confirmed by the Senate, not only would the abortion license remain unbridled for generations; *Roe*'s



"It's great up here—you can belong to both left- and right-wing organizations."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lethal logic and *Roe*'s deracinated concept of freedom as radical personal autonomy would continue to infect other aspects of our public life. A Court dominated by Clinton and Gore appointees could also be counted on to continue the Court's fifty-three-year-long effort to establish secularism as the official creed of the American republic.

Would Bush nominees to the Supreme Court jettison *Roe* as wrongly decided? Perhaps not. But they would almost certainly not treat abortion-on-demand as the *ne plus ultra* of constitutionally guaranteed rights. That is its current status, and that is what Gore appointees would be required to reaffirm as their admission ticket to the bench. Bush appointees might not go the whole way and recognize that there is only one "religion clause" in the Constitution, in which "no establishment" serves the goal of "free exercise." But Gore appointees would certainly render Father Richard Neuhaus's public square even more naked than it already is. And does anyone believe for a minute that vouchers or some other way of empowering parents to send their children to schools of their choosing would withstand scrutiny by a Court dominated by Clinton and Gore appointees?

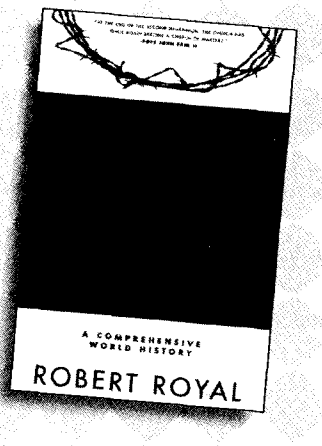
Beyond the specifics is the larger issue—the judicial usurpation of our democracy. We are, increasingly, a people stripped of the rights of self-government. The Court's decision in the partial-birth abortion case *Stenberg* v. *Carhart* overturned a bill that had been passed by Nebraska's unicameral state legislature 99 to 1—a demonstration of popular will that didn't give the slightest pause to the Court majority. Bush has said that he will appoint judges who interpret the law, not make the law. It is not the most elegant of formulations, but it gets to the essential point: "We the people" are no longer ruling through our duly elected representatives. Unless that trend is reversed, our democracy is in serious jeopardy.

The next four years will likely be the last window of opportunity in which to build some legal boundaries around the temptation, posed by the new biotechnologies, to remanufacture the human condition by remanufacturing human beings. In our present state of moral and scientific confusion (in which the nation's leading newspaper can blithely describe a human embryo as a "microscopic clump of cells," overlooking the biological fact that that "clump" is what the *New York Times*'s reporters and editors looked like at that stage in their lives), it is just barely conceivable that we will get those boundaries in place in time. But that work will be in vain if the Supreme Court continues to insist, against both Catholic social doctrine and the classic political theory of the West, that freedom is personal autonomy, period, and that "personhood" is something the state ascribes at its pleasure.

That is what a Supreme Court dominated by Gore nominees will insist. And that is why Governor Bush must be elected. □

George Weigel *is senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.*

A Century of Martyrdom



Robert Royal
CATHOLIC MARTYRS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
A Comprehensive World History

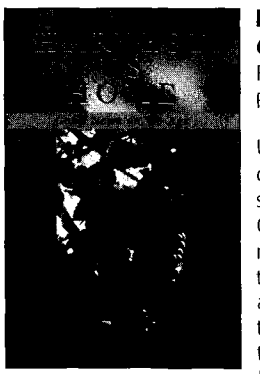
"By being judiciously selective as well as writing well, Royal has provided us with a useful panoramic view of the many people who died for Christ in the twentieth century."
—LAWRENCE S. CUNNINGHAM, COMMONWEAL

Historical surveys of eighteen political regimes under which martyrdom occurred, including the USSR and Latin America. Contains moving biographical portraits of key protagonists.

0-8245-1846-2 $39.95 hc, illustrated

THE CROSSROAD PUBLISHING COMPANY
481 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1550, New York, NY 10001
At your bookstore or call 1-800-395-0690.

Hope for a Fruitful Future...



Harvest Us Home
Good News as We Age
Rachel Callahan, C.S.C. and Rea McDonnell, S.S.N.D.

Using imagery from nature, and drawing on psychology, contemporary spirituality and Scripture, Rachel Callahan and Rea McDonnell invite mature readers to tend themselves, their relationships, their memories and their future, in cooperation with the "gardener God" who carefully tends and harvests all people. McDonnell and Callahan look to Jesus, the pioneer in all that it means to be fully human and fully alive, and to Mary, who lived through the joys and sorrows of a richly fruitful maturity. From the riches of Scripture they offer readers a vision of aging as a time of great wisdom and grace. *Harvest Us Home* is a reflection on the good news of God's good work in each and every person. It offers readers the opportunity to make a prayer pilgrimage—savoring the mysteries of grace they have lived—and to learn about many of the aspects of aging that they are experiencing.
ISBN 0-86716-372-0 **$9.95**

Available at your local bookstore or call **1-800-488-0488** to order

ST. ANTHONY MESSENGER PRESS
AND FRANCISCAN COMMUNICATIONS
1615 Republic Street
Cincinnati, OH 45210-1298

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Eugene McCarraher

If you want to live like a Republican," President Bill Clinton advised in his speech to the Democratic National Convention, "then you better vote for a Democrat." Thus did the Triangulator-in-Chief confirm his party's ideological deference to the GOP. Indeed, seldom has the symbiosis of the two major parties been expressed with such unself-conscious crassness. Yet seldom has a clearer sign appeared that it is time to end the two-party regime of money, smugness, and consensus that nullifies every ballot. And the best way to exercise this urgent obligation is to vote this November for the Green Party ticket of Ralph Nader and Winona LaDuke.

"But isn't voting for Nader wasting your vote?" the pundits insinuate. I think the question is just the opposite. Why are you stealing support from the Greens by casting a vote for either Al Gore or George W. Bush, two essentially interchangeable figureheads? I contend that the Green Party is currently the most indispensable vehicle, not only for the reclamation of our democracy from corporate power, but for the moral and imaginative renovation of our political life.

Ralph Nader's moral integrity and intellectual caliber are unimpeachable, and he demonstrated his populist credentials by walking the picket lines with striking Verizon workers. (Try to imagine Gore doing this, and you'll appreciate the need for a Green insurgency.) But the understandable focus on Nader has drawn attention away from the Green platform, an even more durable reason to abandon the mainstream. It calls for easing voter registration; twelve-year term limits on public officials; and full public financing of election campaigns. It endorses the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act, one of the chief obstacles to a robust revival of the labor movement; worker control of pension funds; a proportional, single-chamber Congress; long-overdue cuts to the military budget, and an end to the "war on drugs" that has violated civil liberties, entangled the United States in a counterinsurgency war in Colombia, and distracted attention from urban poverty—as well as failed to stem the consumption of narcotics. It demands universal health care through a single-payer system; a thirty-hour work week so that "working families" (a phrase that unwittingly ratifies the assimilation of family life to corporate designs) can be just families; and not a minimum but a living wage, something Catholics especially should endorse with historical pride.

Indeed, the Green conceptions of ecology and economics recall some of the oft-forgotten but most desperately needed notions of Catholic social thought. In genuinely "personalist" fashion, the Greens call for an end to the legal fiction of corporate personhood and the gradual breakup of large corporations. Moving beyond the "regulatory" approach to corporations and an idea of civic virtue that does not extend much beyond recycling laws, the Green environmental program encourages bio-regionalist approaches to ecology and production that used to be championed by people as diverse as Peter Kropotkin, Lewis Mumford, the Catholic Workers, and the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. In what could be considered an imaginative extension of the "seamless garment" ethic, Greens call for the prohibition of patents on life forms in order both to preserve genetic diversity and to guarantee farmers' access to seeds and other biotechnologies. And by insisting on "workplace democracy"—meaning not only a reanimated union movement but complete worker control of management, supervision, and technical design—the Greens revive not only syndicalism and guild socialism, but the democratic corporatist schemes of Jacques Maritain, John Ryan, and Raymond McGowan, as well as the ideals of Dorothy Day and Robert Ludlow.

While the Greens' support for unlimited abortion rights should trouble Catholic voters, its conjunction with opposition to capital punishment should also highlight the contradiction and falsity of the positions taken by the consensus parties. Both parties unequivocally endorse the death penalty. But while the Democrats' advocacy of "choice" is adamantine, the Republicans' stated antithesis is, I strongly suspect, bogus, a rhetorical and even cynical ploy to attract Evangelical and Catholic voters. (Twenty years of relative inaction, the prominence of prochoice governors, and the prochoice sentiments of many Republican voters are additional reasons to suspect Republican integrity on this score.) I would argue that both major parties fail, in theory as well as in practice, the litmus test of any serious "life ethic." (Yes, litmus tests are eminently proper—what is real politics, folks, without pH levels of partisanship?) Thus, partly by default and partly by conviction, the Green platform is the ensemble of positions most palatable to Catholics.

This platform, while plainly more intelligent, republican, and genuinely populist than the boilerplate of the consensus parties, contains demands that at this point can also be described as utopian. But at this moral and imaginative nadir of our political culture, they represent the only visionary force in American politics, and vision becomes politically legitimate only through support. And that vision constitutes the only antidote to the facile cynicism that makes the choice between "the lesser of the evils" into the permanent condition of the evil of the lessers. □

Eugene McCarraher *is currently working on a study of corporate business and the modern American moral imagination. His* Christian Critics *(Cornell) has just been published.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Rand Richards Cooper

SEX, DRUGS & MOM

'Almost Famous'

Almost Famous is writer/director Cameron Crowe's warmly personal look back at a boy caught between rock and a hard Mom. Set in San Diego in 1973, the film follows a fifteen-year-old named William (Patrick Fugit), a bright kid with a passion for Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin. Frances McDormand (*Fargo*) plays William's embattled but spirited mother, Elaine, a Shakespeare-quoting professor whose idea of family fun is sitting around discussing *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and who rails against "the poetry of drugs and promiscuous sex." William's older sister, meanwhile, schools him in rock-as-revelation—listen to The Who's *Tommy* with a candle burning, she says, and he'll see his whole future. Of course, Mom has a vision of his future as well; she's thinking law school.

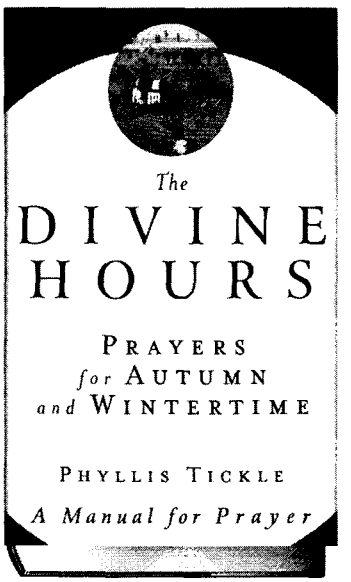
As things turn out, William's future is now. Writing about music for his school paper, he sends some clips to famed rock critic and *Creem* magazine editor Lester Bangs (Philip Seymour Hoffman, again showing why he's the best younger actor onscreen today). Bangs gives him a few assignments, and soon *Rolling Stone* is calling to ask whether William is available to do a piece—unaware he's just a kid, and has to sell the idea to his mother first. Elaine panics, but hey, what's an achievement-oriented single mom to do? And so William lucks into the job of covering an up-and-coming band, Stillwater, for a legendary national magazine, and his road trip into the rock world begins.

Crowe works from a sure sense of oppositions, and *Almost Famous* basks in the fun of surrounding a smart but idealistic and almost criminally adorable kid ("Who brought Opie?" someone asks) with bad-boy rockers and sexy girl groupies. William's impossible expectations collide with the reality of Stillwater, a group that is one part talent and three parts egomania, hedonism, and phony profundity. Microphone in hand, the acolyte-journalist keeps trying to elicit philosophy from them, and keeps getting lines like "Rock and roll can save the world—and the chicks are great!" Stillwater's handsome lead guitarist, Russell (Billy Crudup), is the special object of William's hero worship, and Crowe plots a course of disenchantment that includes an acid-tripping Russell shouting from a rooftop to a throng of fans, "I am a golden god!"

If *Almost Famous* never becomes a satire in the manner of Rob Reiner's classic rock mockumentary, *This Is Spinal Tap*, it's not because Stillwater doesn't deserve it. Rather, some gentle affection keeps reining Crowe in. For long stretches he's happy just to take us out on the road with Stillwater, playing the comedy of William's phone calls home to Mom (she has him put Russell on the line for a stinging verbal spanking), or a harrowing plane ride through a storm, when band members start spewing deathbed confessions. Gradually a kind of plot develops in the triangle involving William, Russell, and the lead girl groupie, Penny Lane, played with angelic sultriness by Kate Hudson, Goldie Hawn's daughter.

This is an autobiographical film—the details of William's excellent adventure match those of Cameron Crowe's own, right down to the *Rolling Stone* gig—and you can feel Crowe trying to fashion his experiences into a narrative of moral education. But *Almost Famous* is less a rock *bildungsroman* than a boy's fantasy story, something akin to *Tom Swift and His Amazing Rock Machine*. The problem is how to draw resounding life lessons from the charmed story of precocity meeting incredible good luck—where's the adversity, the obstacle, the danger? All three of Crowe's earlier films (*Say*

Enrich each day with prayer.



Restoring and renewing a beloved tradition, *The Divine Hours* trilogy offers an authoritative yet gentle guide to a daily cycle of prayer. In this second volume, *Prayers for Autumn and Wintertime*, Phyllis Tickle leads worshipers through a new season of sacred devotion based on the Benedictine Rule of fixed-hour prayer. The result is a magnificent beacon for all who seek the divine path.

Also available
The Divine Hours: Prayers for Summertime

Doubleday
Available wherever books are sold
www.doubleday.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Anything, *Singles*, and *Jerry Maguire*) featured protagonists wanting things they couldn't have and having things they didn't want. But William has everything, right away. Ultimately, Crowe settles on a drama of integrity. William's rock-critic mentor, Lester Bangs, warns that a rock writer's first duty is to "be honest and merciless," which above all means never befriending the band you're writing about. Will William heed Bangs's warning, or cave in and cozy up to Stillwater? Will he stand tall as a "rock journalist," or sell out and write a puff piece?

It's a little weird to see such questions take center stage in the movie. After all, in journalistic consequence, this isn't exactly Woodward and Bernstein territory. More important, can we really believe that ethical temptations so preoccupy William, surrounded as he is by glitter and fame and sexy, available girls with porn-star-sounding names like Penny Lane, Sapphire, and Polexia? (Toward the middle of the movie, William in fact loses his virginity, and the scene barely causes a ripple.) The dilemma Crowe stakes out—namely, that while rock critics worship musicians and covet their approval, writing well about them means risking their wrath—is so narrow, indeed professional, that it risks turning a boy's coming-of-age story into a primer on journalistic ethics. *Almost Famous* hinges on concerns that seem vaguely trumped-up and classroomy, as if the real action is going on everywhere but where the teacher wants us to look.

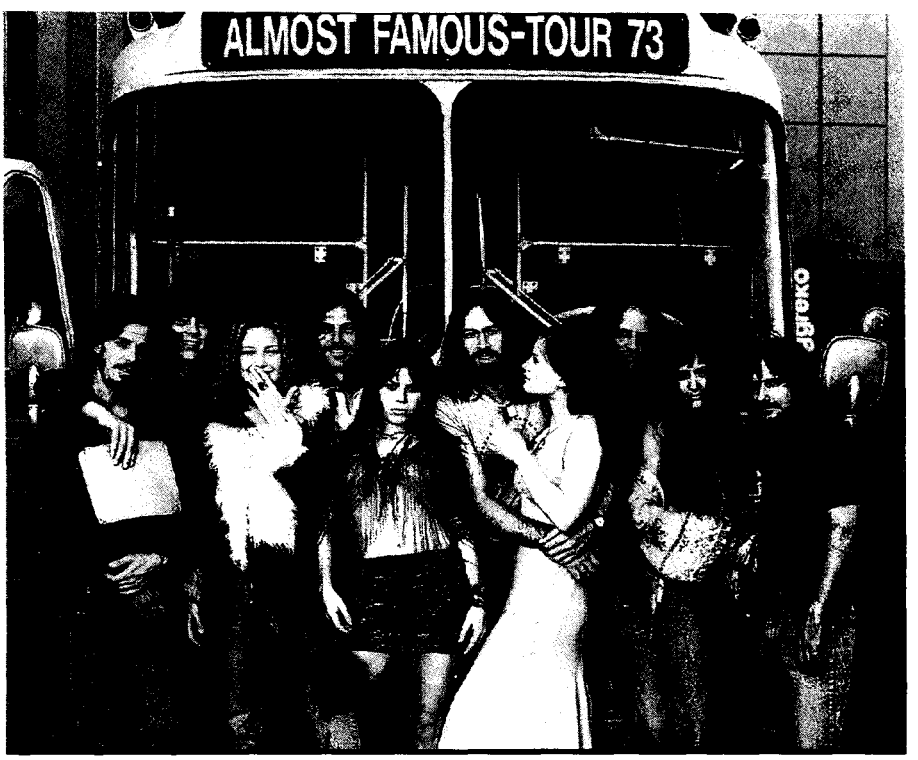
The film doggedly preserves a core of innocence about music and human motives, and thereby remains lodged inside William's own idealized notions of integrity. We can only guess, for instance, at how much more complicated the rock world looks from where Lester Bangs is sitting; Crowe won't let us see it that way. *Almost Famous* remains a boy's movie to the end, with William rescuing Russell from a dangerous slide toward careerism, back into his once passionate love of music. (Not only that, but he's going to start treating his groupies with respect, too!). Crowe can't resist pushing *Almost Famous* up the arc of a moral lesson into a happy ending, and it all feels too clear and clean. The movie comes off as neater than its own materials.

But then, Cameron Crowe is a bit tidy himself. His work has the quality of a star student who does the assignment better than anyone else and then adds a touch of flair; the teachers love it, first because it's really good, but also because it makes them feel cool. At just twenty-four Crowe published a slick and almost eerily sure-handed nonfiction book, *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*, the movie of which (he wrote the screenplay) helped define '80s teen flicks. His own films so far—witty romances informed by a participant-observer's eye for the nuances of youth culture—can feel a little like TV, unerringly trained on what's popular, but they also keep surprising you with good writing and a stealthy human complexity. And always they aim unabashedly for the heart. Remember the lovely scene in *Say Anything* when John Cusack holds up a boom box blasting Peter Gabriel's ballad, "In Your Eyes," outside his girlfriend's house? That was a prime Crowe moment, warmly and wittily transforming a boom box, that instrument of public disruption, into a kind of serenading pop violin.

Tellingly, the soundtrack of *Almost Famous* is loaded with Cat Stevens, Elton John, Joni Mitchell, and Stevie Wonder, and the movie itself has a soft and warmly pleasant aura. William may long to be "dark and mysterious," but alas, as one of the groupies tells him, "Honey, you're too sweet for rock and roll," and the same may be true of Crowe. Where's the darkness in this movie? Where's the risk? For all Mom's worries about the perils of rock, William is never taken in: He instantly recognizes Russell's displays of narcissism for what they are, instead of being wowed; drugs hold no allure; and he barely seems to care about losing his virginity. Like William the movie comes across as genetically incapable of bad-boy rocker rebelliousness; it's good-boy through and through. Crowe's sunny, genial charm turns *Almost Famous* into a revisionist triumph of pop over rock.

Audiences will love this movie for its intelligent, mellow gentleness—a funny, feel-good movie even parents can like. Elaine can rest reassured: rock is really about romance, not sex; and while road-tripping sounds racy, really her son is out there honing his ethical skills, saving rockers' wayward souls, and carving out a nice little career for himself, all at once.

It's enough to make every Mom rush out and buy her boy a Stratocaster. □



A sentimental education

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Celia Wren

WE HAVE GOOD BOOKS, TOO

'Masterpiece Theatre' goes American

Anglophobes rejoice! After thirty years, the creators of "Masterpiece Theatre" have acknowledged that Britain holds no monopoly on literary brilliance. This fall the cosily middlebrow PBS series finally visits home turf with the debut of the American Collection—nine adaptations of Yankee works, scheduled to air over the next three years. The Collection kicks off on October 25 with "Cora Unashamed," based on the short story by Langston Hughes (with an encore broadcast on October 29). Future programs will be devoted to Henry James's *The American* (slated for January 2001), Willa Cather's *The Song of the Lark*, Esmeralda Santiago's *Almost a Woman*, and James Agee's *A Death in the Family*, among others.

What took them so long? Launched in January 1971 with a twelve-part epic about Sir Winston Churchill's ancestors, "Masterpiece Theatre" has long exemplified that deplorable American snobbishness that values British culture over the homegrown stuff. This mindset has recently reigned on Broadway, dominated over the past few years by U.K.-birthed imports like *The Blue Room*. (Common wisdom in nonprofit theater circles holds, a little bitterly, that the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Wit* could have transferred successfully to Broadway had playwright or director been British).

Some deep-seated inferiority complex on our part makes British art seem smarter and classier than it really is—as "Masterpiece Theatre" has often demonstrated with panache. The novels of Joanna Trollope (*The Choir*, etc.) may inspire superbly entertaining television, but are they really masterpieces? And remember the telecasts, during the 1995–96 season, of that modern *chef d'oeuvre*, "Prime Suspect"?

Full disclosure: Mystery-addict that I am, I found "Prime Suspect" irresistible. But I cheerfully acknowledge that such police procedurals belong on "Mystery!" rather than with adaptations of *Oliver Twist* and *Anna Karenina*. The work that inspires the American Collection's initial offering is, perhaps, not one of literature's top-drawer masterpieces either. The first fourteen pages of Langston Hughes's "Cora Unashamed" are an extended setup for the fifteenth and concluding one, in which the personality of the eponymous heroine undergoes an astonishing metamorphosis. Born into the only African-American family in a tiny Iowa town, Cora spends the years of the Depression working as maid to the Studevant family, suffering the whims of the imperious Mrs. Studevant, until that matriarch brings tragedy upon the household. As a fictional character, Cora is little more than the sum of her circumstances—unmarried mother, exploited servant—at least until her final transformation.

In PBS's version, however, the high-octane talents of actress Regina Taylor (best known from her work on the series "I'll Fly Away") turn Cora into a smoldering dreamer. Suggesting battened-down rebellion through carefully guarded expression and movement—the way she holds her head while answering Mrs. Studevant, the way she draws in a sharp breath while passing biscuits around the family's dinner table—Taylor gives Cora such magnetism that the maid's final explosion is convincing in a way that it isn't in Hughes's story. Cherry Jones pulls off less of a coup with the role of Mrs. Studevant, but then what can you do with lines like "The only thing I prayed for when I was pregnant was that she wouldn't have freckles"? Screenwriter Ann Peacock has fleshed out the personality of Cora's mother (C.C.H. Pounder) and other Hughes characters, but left Mrs. Studevant a two-dimensional, prejudiced social climber.

Christmas shopping early? Give a gift of Commonweal. Subscribe online at: commonwealmagazine.org

Using Peacock's screenplay and emphasizing quiet scenes of domesticity, director Deborah M. Pratt has eked Hughes's tale out to a rather dawdling two hours. Unfortunately, she and her collaborators have also added a heavy dose of sentimentality. Love scenes take place in a breeze-swept cornfield that seems to have been lifted from an Estée Lauder perfume ad. A love letter waxes absurdly eloquent with statements like "I will see you in the cornfield; I will see you where the blue grass grows." And in the aftermath of a child's death, the camera dwells mawkishly on an empty chair and an empty swing, as if Charles Dickens were playing cinematographer.

It's almost as if the creative team at PBS, unsure that American works will really clear the masterpiece bar, has emphasized emotion, so that viewers will at least feel something. You can sense a similar hesitancy from the American Collection's credit sequence—one whose sepia-tinged fadeaways diverge drastically from the usual prelude to Russell Baker. "Masterpiece Theatre" episodes heretofore have bounded off to a smugly confident start as the camera pans over an aristocratic library, luxuriating across leather-bound volumes to the triumphant strains of J.J. Mouret's "Fanfare for the King's Supper." Episodes in the American collection, by contrast, float into existence to a wistful melody by John Williams (Yo-Yo Ma plays the cello) while cursive-inked pages fade in and out, stamped occasionally by silhouetted Americana—a paddle boat, a farm, the Statue of Liberty.

In the traditional "Masterpiece Theatre" opener, the camera moves slowly over a book-lined study where literature is seen as a *fait accompli*, an accessory to a successful lifestyle, like a satin smoking jacket. In the American Collection's sequence, literature seems fragile and open-ended. It's a vision of literature, perhaps, that solicits the opinion of the audience rather than dictates *ex cathedra*. Are these works masterpieces or are they not? You decide. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When workers ruled (more or less)

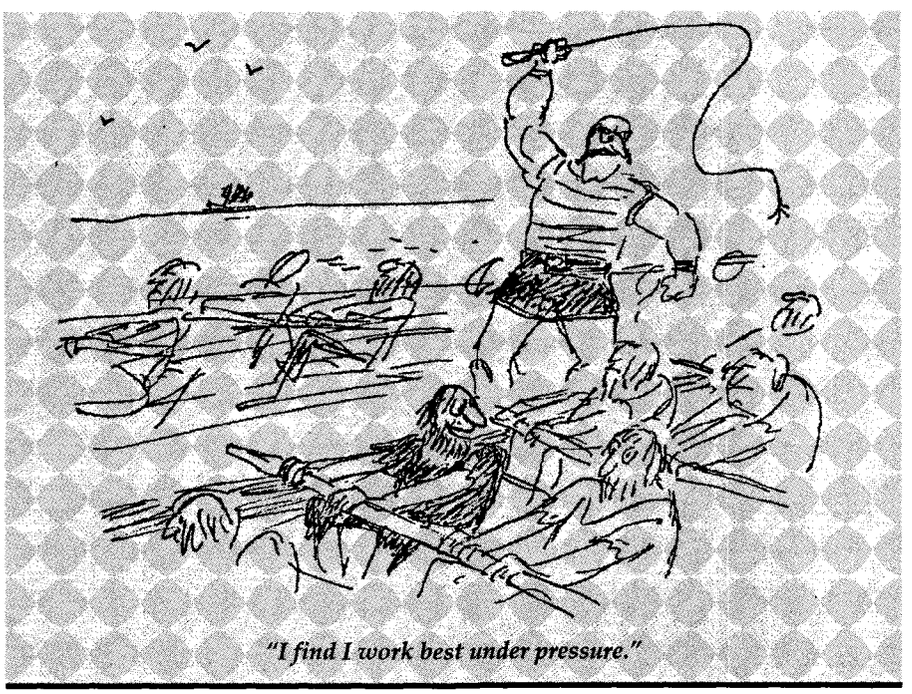
Working-Class New York
Life and Labor Since World War II
Joshua B. Freeman
The New Press, $35, 409 pp.

Bruce Nelson

Joshua Freeman's *Working-Class New York* brilliantly recaptures the sustained historical moment, from the end of World War II through the late 1960s, when "working-class New Yorkers...played a pervasive role in shaping the city's social, economic, and political structure." The result, Freeman argues, was the rise of "a social-democratic polity unique in the country in its ambition and achievements." Pushed by a politically active working class and a powerful trade union movement, successive mayoral administrations constructed a regime characterized by public and co-op housing (not just for the poor but for broad sectors of the city's population), rent control, low transit fares, tuition-free higher education, a reputable municipal hospital system, vibrant cultural institutions that were easily affordable and widely used, and a commitment to racial equality. Much if not all of this went sharply against the grain of where the rest of the nation was headed; it was, says the author, a clear case of "New York exceptionalism." Indeed, in this regard, the city had "more in common with postwar European norms" than with politics in the rest of the United States.

How did such a regime emerge and develop? Freeman, a professor of history at Queens College, identifies several explanatory factors that decenter the city's image as a bastion of high finance and high culture. First, New York was, according to a 1947 estimate, "the greatest manufacturing town on earth." Indeed, it had nearly a million manufacturing jobs—more than Boston, Philadelphia, Detroit, and Los Angeles combined. And there were millions more workers in the city—in wholesale and retail trade, in administrative and service occupations, in transportation. Freeman estimates that in 1947 workers and their families constituted a "clear majority" of New York's population of nearly 8 million. Moreover, by the early 1950s, at least a million of these workers belonged to trade unions, including some of the most aggressive and innovative labor organizations in the nation. Communists and socialists had played a vital role in building some of these unions and shaping their political agendas. But beyond their influence, Freeman argues for the preeminence of a plebeian cosmopolitanism and cultural pluralism, symbolized by Jackie Robinson and the Brooklyn Dodgers' famed "Boys of Summer"; and he attaches great weight to the fact that most of New York's workers were renters, not homeowners. Unlike their more classically proletarian counterparts on Detroit's auto assembly lines, they were not concerned about property taxes and were thus far more willing to levy charges for social provision on the city and its real-property owners.

Although Freeman laments the demise of this polity and the fragmentation of the relatively cohesive and politically decisive working-class presence upon which it was based, *Working-Class New York* is no sentimental gloss on "the world we have lost." The author recognizes that even during the heyday of New York exceptionalism the story was not all about working-class solidarity and social-democratic



"I find I work best under pressure."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

achievement. Thus racial discrimination persisted, and shaped job and housing markets, in spite of antidiscrimination laws. Unions were divided on issues of major importance. Those in the manufacturing sector fought the erosion of factory jobs, while those in building trade unions welcomed the destruction of "obsolete" factory districts and the construction of high-rise corporate headquarters in their place. Meanwhile, working-class (and other) New Yorkers were leaving the city in droves—half a million whites in the 1940s, 1.2 million more in the 1950s. Many left for the suburbs of the metropolitan area; others took refuge in the far reaches of Queens. Consciously or not, they were opting for a version of the American Dream that was sharply at odds with the city's dense residential patterns and communal ethos. In short, working-class New York was always in flux, and it was no utopia. But, says Freeman, "looking back from a later era of postliberalism, social meanness, and labor retreat, what New York workers accomplished during the quarter-century after World War II seems utterly breathtaking."

The rest of the story will be more familiar to most readers, because many more of us have lived it. It includes changing racial and ethnic demographics and persistent racial polarization; the emergence of a new political economy, along with a growing ambivalence about the role of government in generating jobs and providing for the health and welfare of New Yorkers; and the rise of aggressive public-sector unions that have often pitted service providers against the consumers of municipal services. Freeman's chapter on the Ocean Hill-Brownsville experiment in community control of education, and the citywide teacher strikes it helped to generate, is masterly, as is his treatment of the backlash among building tradesmen and other, mainly white, workers in the late sixties and early seventies. He traces the increasing centrality of public-sector unionism in the ranks of organized labor, while accenting the preponderant economic and political influence of private-sector power brokers like Felix Rohatyn and Donald Trump. He acknowledges, moreover, that while there are as many organized workers in the city today as there were during the heyday of urban social democracy, class sensibilities have eroded over the years and, in their place, ethnic and racial identities have come to the forefront.

Many readers of this magazine may recall that in the early 1950s nearly half of all New Yorkers were Catholic and more than a quarter were Jewish. (Among whites, Protestants made up only 16 percent of the city's population.) It would be reasonable to assume, then, that the city's white working class was disproportionately Catholic, and that many of Freeman's generalizations about the cosmopolitanism and progressive orientation of the city's workers would apply to them as well as to the Jews who were concentrated in the ranks of avowedly social-democratic unions like the International Ladies Garment Workers. But on the few occasions when Freeman focuses directly on Catholics, he tends to emphasize their conservatism. This was especially true, he argues, during the late forties and early fifties, when cultural

LOYOLA COLLEGE IN MARYLAND

DEAN

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Loyola College in Maryland invites applications and nominations for the position of Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The previous dean has become the chief academic officer at Fordham University; the position is available July 1, 2001, and is being held by an interim appointee during the current academic year. Loyola College is a dynamic, highly selective Jesuit institution, steeped in the liberal arts tradition and recognized as a leading independent, comprehensive university in the mid-Atlantic region. Located on 65 acres in a beautiful residential section of Baltimore, Loyola enrolls over 3,100 students in its undergraduate programs and 3,000 students in its graduate programs. Loyola College operates with a budget of approximately $112 million and holds an endowment of $150 million.

The College of Arts and Sciences is composed of 20 academic departments with 171 full-time faculty. The College offers undergraduate degree programs in the traditional liberal arts and sciences, engineering, speech pathology, and education. It also offers master's programs in psychology, education, pastoral counseling, speech pathology, engineering, and modern studies. There is a Ph.D. program in pastoral counseling and a Psy.D. program in clinical psychology. Loyola has study abroad programs in Leuven, Belgium; Newcastle upon Tyne, England; Alcala, Spain; Melbourne, Australia; and Bangkok, Thailand.

The dean is the principal executive officer of the College of Arts and Sciences; he or she reports to the vice president for academic affairs and serves on the president's management team. Reporting to the dean are 20 department chairs, the director of the College Honors Program, the director of the Center for the Humanities, and an associate dean. The dean's responsibilities include providing vision and leadership in fulfilling the College's Jesuit, Catholic mission; administering the College; supporting faculty excellence and professional growth; and promoting efforts to increase diversity. The dean will lead the strategic planning process for the College of Arts and Sciences and play an active role in shaping the plan for Loyola College as a whole.

Applicants must have academic leadership experience, preferably at an institution of high quality that values both teaching and scholarship; academic credentials and qualifications sufficient to earn the respect of the academic community and appointment to an academic department at a senior rank; a clear vision of the purpose and goals of liberal education at a Jesuit, Catholic institution and a commitment to Jesuit, Catholic ideals; and a demonstrated commitment to diversity. The dean's salary is highly competitive and commensurate with qualifications and experience. Additional information about the institution and the position is available on the College's website at www.loyola.edu/cas_dean.

Nominations and applications are invited. Review of candidates begins on November 10 and will continue until the position is filled. Confidentiality will be maintained until finalists have been named, and references will not be contacted until candidates have been notified. Candidate materials, including a letter describing interest in and qualifications for the position and the names and phone numbers of five references, should be sent to the College's search consultant, Dr. Jean Dowdall, A.T. Kearney Executive Search, 333 John Carlyle Street, Alexandria VA 22314. Communication and submission of materials by email as MS Word attachments is encouraged; send materials to elizabeth.moseley@atkearney.com. For more information, our consultants can also be contacted by phone at (757) 437-3006, or by fax at (520) 395-1510.

Loyola College in Maryland is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and political issues often pitted Catholics against Jews and, more broadly, arrayed an "openly religious, conservative Americanism" against a "left-liberal, secular, pluralist Americanism." There is a problem here, of course; it suggests dissonance and even deeply rooted fragmentation within the ranks of a working class that Freeman has identified as sufficiently unified in its core sensibilities to provide the foundation stone of a social-democratic polity.

The culture wars of the McCarthy era would ebb and flow over the next half century. As they receded in the late fifties and early sixties the political space in which to develop a progressive agenda expanded accordingly. However, at precisely this time—during the halcyon days of "Big Labor" in New York—the steady erosion of manufacturing jobs, the rapid growth of the city's nonwhite population, and the acceleration of the struggle for black equality combined to sharpen the fault lines that divided New Yorkers (and the nation). What is remarkable, then, is not the existence of a unified working-class consciousness and impulse toward solidarity at the grassroots. Such impulses were real, but even in the best of times they competed with narrower and more parochial sensibilities that also had deep roots in working-class communities. What is remarkable is the convergence of underlying historical forces with a labor leadership and substantial segments of labor's rank and file committed to the proposition that government existed mainly to serve the needs—above all, to enhance the security—of ordinary citizens.

Freeman is hopeful that, even in the new "global economy," New York's workers can make that sensibility powerful again. But doing it—building a viable political coalition out of the ethnically diverse and racially polarized components of today's workforce, and developing a compelling program of generous social provision in these leaner, meaner times—will be "no easy walk." □

Bruce Nelson *is professor of history at Dartmouth College.*

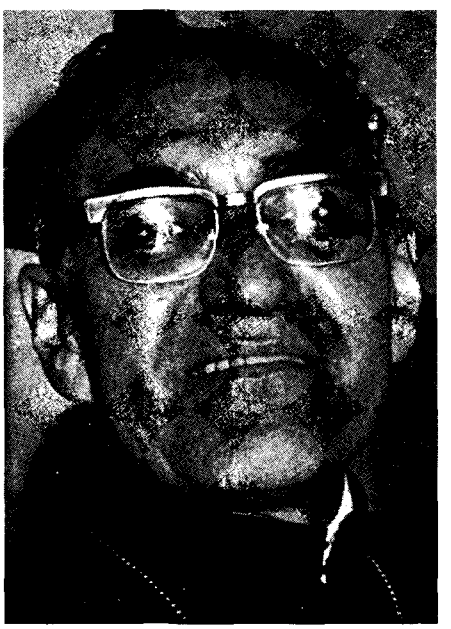
A MAN IN DARK TIMES

Oscar Romero
Memories in Mosaic
María López Vigil
Translated by Kathy Ogle
EPICA, $19.95, 424 pp.

Patrick Jordan

This portrait of Oscar Romero (1917–80), the archbishop of San Salvador murdered at the altar during El Salvador's civil war, is, as the title says, mosaic-like. For Romero, posterity might well come to consider it the equivalent of what *The Little Flowers of Saint Francis* came to be for the poor man from Assisi. That is because *Mosaic* tells the story of the Salvadoran martyr through the reminiscences of dozens of people who knew him, recollections that are evocative in detail, vivid in language, and while not given to the miraculous, do give evidence of God's power in a remarkable time and person.

Most people know, at least in outline, the high drama and appalling bloodshed



of Romero's story. This compendium provides that, but, more pointedly, it tells the story of a conversion, the conversion of a bishop who becomes a genuine witness of Christ. It is a conversion story all the more salient for being told in the irrepressible voices of those who witnessed it.

Robert Royal, in his chapter on the martyrs of El Salvador in *The Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century* (Crossroad), stresses the continuity of Romero's spiritual path, nods to his closeness to Opus Dei, and underscores the support he received from Pope John Paul II. *Memories in Mosaic* tells a very different story. Here we find Romero, a generous young prelate who is, nonetheless, a stickler for regulations, ill at ease with others and disliked by many, overworked, and sometimes clearly depressed. His lip trembles at the mention of Medellín, the revolutionary meeting of Latin American bishops in 1968. As Carmen Álvarez recalls, "It seemed to me that he had his head in the clouds, away from reality, up in the trees like avocados." Romero's eventual successor, Arturo Rivera y Damas, speaks of him as a loner who often appeared exhausted; Inocencio Alas, another friend, describes him as "a pastor to his paperwork."

But this all changed dramatically in 1977 after Romero was appointed archbishop of San Salvador by Pope Paul VI. A priest Romero greatly admired, Rutilio Grande, S.J., was murdered by death squads, the rightist Roberto D'Aubuison began a public "Be a Patriot. Kill a Priest" campaign, and National Guardsmen mowed down parishioners and desecrated a church at Aguilares. As *Mosaic* relates, the timorous Romero reached out and became a man of the people, soon the most outspoken leader for justice in the country. At a time when people buried their Bibles for fear of the army, Romero said that he had learned to read the Gospels anew from the Salvadoran people. His Sunday homilies, broadcast

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nationwide, became the voice of the dispossessed and the disappeared, the scourge of the conscienceless. As a result, the papal nuncio told a group of catechists that "The church is in danger because of the insane behavior of this archbishop." There was talk of Rome appointing an administrator, and the U.S. Embassy in San Salvador forwarded negative criticism of Romero to the Vatican. Following the assassination of another close friend, Father Octavio Ortiz, Romero said the president of El Salvador was a liar for having declared the church was not being persecuted.

According to María López Vigil, Pope John Paul II consented to see Romero following Ortiz's death, but implied to Romero, the archbishop's protestations notwithstanding, that Ortiz had been a guerrilla. Romero was devastated, particularly by the pope's icy manner. He had expected something different from a fellow bishop who had lived through persecution.

But these are only a few of the themes that emerge from this captivating collection, and not the major one. What is most telling here is the picture of Romero's personality, illustrated with striking vividness: his pushiness, his fears, his run-ins and impatience with other bishops, his appetites (Questioner: "What would you miss most in heaven?" Romero: "Beans and avocados. Going without them will be awful"), his love of marimba music, his remarkable courage, and the delight he took in laughter and a colorful joke.

César Jerez tells the story of a staff meeting: "'History is moving too fast. Things are happening before we expect them to,' someone said one day. And Monsignor Romero said, 'It's like when the French priest went to perform a wedding in a village way far away. The bride was all dressed up in white and wearing her orange blossom wreath in her hair, but you could tell she was practically nine months pregnant. When the priest saw her coming down the aisle in such an "advanced" state, he says to her, "You should be wearing oranges instead of orange blossoms!"' And he [Romero] threw his head back and laughed."

If there is anything this collection lacks, it is a fuller set of critical voices.

New releases

"Go on a virtual retreat with saints and holy ones..."—Publishers Weekly

A Retreat With Luke
Stepping Out on the Word of God
Barbara E. Reid, O.P.

In this seven-day retreat, *Stepping Out on the Word of God*, your director is Luke the Evangelist, author of the third Gospel. You are invited to "step out on the Word of God," allowing the courage the Good News inspires to carry you throughout the tasks of your life. Leaning particularly on the experiences of the women of the Gospels (more prevalent in Luke than in any other), this retreat weaves their stories into a welcome for those who wish to find what Jesus offers.
ISBN 0-86716-332-1 **$8.95**

A Retreat With Matthew
Going Beyond the Law
Leslie J. Hoppe, O.F.M.

In this seven-day retreat, *Going Beyond the Law*, your director is Matthew the Evangelist, author of the first Gospel. His words will help you to understand how Jesus fulfilled his role as Messiah and brought about the age "foreseen by the prophets and longed for by the pious." Matthew does not disregard the traditions of ancient Israel, but casts them in a new light—the Light of the World."
ISBN 0-86716-329-1 **$9.95**

Available at your local bookstore or call **1-800-488-0488** to order

ST. ANTHONY MESSENGER PRESS
AND FRANCISCAN COMMUNICATIONS
1615 Republic Street
Cincinnati, OH 45210-1298

SAVE THE DATE

November 10 - 12, 2000

Examining the
CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL TRADITION *Conference*

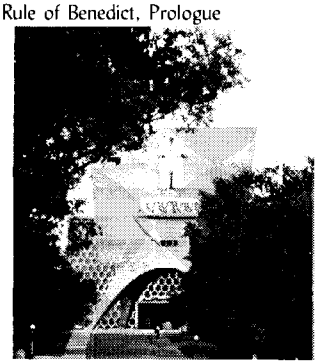
Implications for Academic Programs and Curriculum Development

SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY
FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT

To register, please call: (203) 371-7900
Contact us by email: cit@sacredheart.edu
For further details, visit our website: cit.sacredheart.edu

"Listen . . . with the ear of your heart" - Rule of Benedict, Prologue

Sabbatical
A Time Apart



- *Courses in liturgy, scripture and systematics*
- *Workshops in spirituality and pastoral issues*
- *May be combined with Holy Land Studies*

mbanken@csbsju.edu • http://www.csbsju.edu/sot

Saint John's School of Theology•Seminary • Collegeville, MN 56321 • 800-361-8318

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

True, there are some, but finally they are from within the fold. Providing the perspective of Romero's foes would have made the story all the more compelling. And second, the compiler, after a remarkable effort to gather the materials, does not adequately identify the people speaking. Perhaps most are well known to a Salvadoran audience, but not to this reader. A line of identification for each would have etched their remarks in the reader's inner ear even more firmly.

The translation, on the other hand, is a joy: sure, fluent, and rooted in the Salvadoran idiom. Here is a description of the ovations that would sweep through the cathedral during Romero's sermons: "And the dogs that go to Mass in the cathedral barked too." Romero would have loved it. He had become the bishop of most things Salvadoran. This book, with the immediacy of its Studs Terkel-like panoply of voices, confirmes it. □

Patrick Jordan *is* Commonweal's *managing editor.*

ASSUMPTION COLLEGE

Provost/Dean of Faculty

The Position: The Provost is Chief Academic Officer of the College and Dean of Faculty and reports directly to the President. He/she is responsible for providing academic leadership for the institution according to its stated mission as a small comprehensive Catholic College with a strong liberal arts tradition. The Provost is responsible for assuring excellence in instruction and advising; facilitating faculty development; and providing responsive academic support services for students. He/she supervises all academic administrators and makes recommendations to the President in all matters concerning the appointment of the instructional staff.

Qualifications: An earned doctorate is required as are teaching and administrative experience preferably at the level of Dean or higher. Candidates should be able to show a record of scholarly achievement, teaching success, extensive academic leadership and administrative experience, and commitment to and understanding of Catholic higher education. Direct experience in Catholic higher education will be favorably regarded.

The College: Assumption College, founded in 1904 and sponsored by the Augustinians of the Assumption is an independent, residential, coeducational, comprehensive Catholic College with a strong liberal arts tradition with 2000 undergraduate students, 600 graduate students, 500 continuing education students, and a full-time faculty of 120. The Undergraduate College offers 33 majors in liberal arts and sciences including professional programs in business, social and rehabilitation services and education. Graduate degrees are offered in five areas and a variety of degrees and certificate programs are available in Continuing Education.

The Campus is located on a beautiful 175 acre campus in the residential Westwood Hills section of Worcester. The city, the second largest in New England, is located approximately one hour west of Cambridge and Boston, one hour north of Providence and one hour east of Hartford, and boasts a consortium of 15 colleges and universities, an outstanding art museum and civic center, a regional health care complex, a science museum and many other attractions.

Application Procedure: Closing date for applications is November 15, 2000. Starting date is negotiable. Salary is commensurate with experience and qualifications, and includes excellent fringe benefits. Applications should include a personal letter of interest, a current resume, and the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of at least three professional references. Correspondence should be addressed to: Office of the President, Chair, Search Advisory Committee, Assumption College, 500 Salisbury Street, Worcester, MA 01609-1296.

Assumption College is an equal opportunity employer.

www.assumption.edu

LEARN. ACHIEVE. CONTRIBUTE.

CLASSIFIED

RATES: $1.10 per word; 12-word minimum. Discounts 5 percent, 3 times; 10 percent, 6 times; 15 percent, 12 times. Advance payment required. Discounts and monthly billing available for repeat advertisers. For additional information call 212-662-4200 or write COMMONWEAL, 475 Riverside Dr., Rm. 405, New York, NY 10115.

Manuscripts Wanted

BECOME A PUBLISHED AUTHOR. Quality subsidy publisher accepting manuscripts. 1-800-695-9599.

Conference

THE WORK OF ANDRE DUBUS. March 30–April 1, 2001, Loyola College. Twenty-minute papers or 350-word abstracts by December 1, 2000 to Brennan O'Donnell, Department of English, Loyola College in Maryland, Baltimore, Maryland 21210-2699 / bodonnell@loyola.edu.

Position Available

THE DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE SEEKS a full-time Director of the Office of Ministries. The Office of Ministries fosters the permanent diaconate and non-ordained ministries in the Diocese. The Director directs the educational programs related to the permanent diaconate, lay ministry, and leaders of prayer. Included are the administration of continuing education programs and grant funds, the coordination of advisory boards, and serving as liaison to various Pastoral Education Programs, assisting pastors in recruiting pastoral associates, managing the ministry referral service, and serving on diocesan councils and commissions. Qualifications: A person in full communion with the Catholic Church; graduate degree in theology, related experience in non-ordained ministry in the Church, competence in personnel management, organization and supervisory skills. Starting date January 2001 or sooner. Salary range: $30,000–$42,000. Send letter of introduction with résumé and references to *Ministries Search Committee, Office of the Chancellor, P.O. Box 4004, La Crosse, WI 54602* ***by November 1, 2000.***

commonwealmagazine.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JOE LIEBERMAN'S ORTHODOXY & OURS

Maurice Timothy Reidy

When news of Joe Lieberman's nomination came down last summer, I was at ground zero. OK, not quite ground zero. I was in a suburban bureau of the major newspaper of the vice-presidential candidate's home state. And, because I was supposed to know something about religion, I was asked to contribute to the myriad of stories being written about our famously religious junior senator. My assignment: a brief Q and A on Lieberman's religion.

And so I cobbled together a story on "Modern Orthodoxy." I called friends with Jewish spouses, e-mailed a few of my old professors, and chatted with a couple of rabbis from my old neighborhood. The final result was not ground-breaking, but I hope somewhat illuminating.

Soon after finishing my story, I read *Commonweal*'s editorial on Pius IX (August 11) and it occurred to me that Modern Orthodoxy has much in common with liberal Catholicism—at least as defined here last November 19 (see "Crisis of Liberal Catholicism"). While there are obviously substantial differences between the groups (politically, for example, they occupy different positions within their own traditions), there are some instructive similarities.

Allow me to elaborate. According to a recent article in the *New Yorker*, the Modern Orthodox movement was founded in the 1850s in Frankfurt, Germany by Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch. As Daphne Merkin, the author of the piece, points out, Hirsch was a theologian and leader who "admired Schiller almost as much as Maimonides, cautiously embracing modernity while insisting on the obligation to observe Jewish law." "His credo," she continues, "*Torah im Derech Eretz*—Torah Judaism in harmony with secular culture—was a bow in the direction of both God and Germany."

Sound familiar? Hirsch's struggle to "cautiously embrace modernity" and stay loyal to God and his country reminds me of Archbishop John Ireland, that nineteenth-century American prelate who argued that American democracy was compatible with the Catholic tradition. I'm also reminded of John Courtney Murray, the theologian who, of course, finally helped to incorporate the distinctly American notion of religious liberty into the Catholic tradition during Vatican II.

The similarities between the two movements don't end there. In his *Jew vs. Jew: The Struggle for the Soul of American Jewry* (Simon & Schuster), Samuel G. Freedman writes about the founding of Yeshiva University in 1928—a classic Modern Orthodox institution which, in the words of its first president, Bertrand Revel, was designed for two purposes: *Torah Umaddah*: "Torah and worldly studies." Slightly modified, that could be the slogan of any Catholic university.

Furthermore, Freedman writes that: "Four years after Yeshiva's founding, the personification of its precepts arrived in America" in the person of Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, a scholar who specialized in Plato and Aristotle in addition to the Talmud.

Soloveitchik made me think of the Jesuits I knew who complemented their rigorous theological training with a degree in computer science or German literature or any other "worldly study." (Think of Timothy Healy, S.J., the late president of the New York Public Library.)

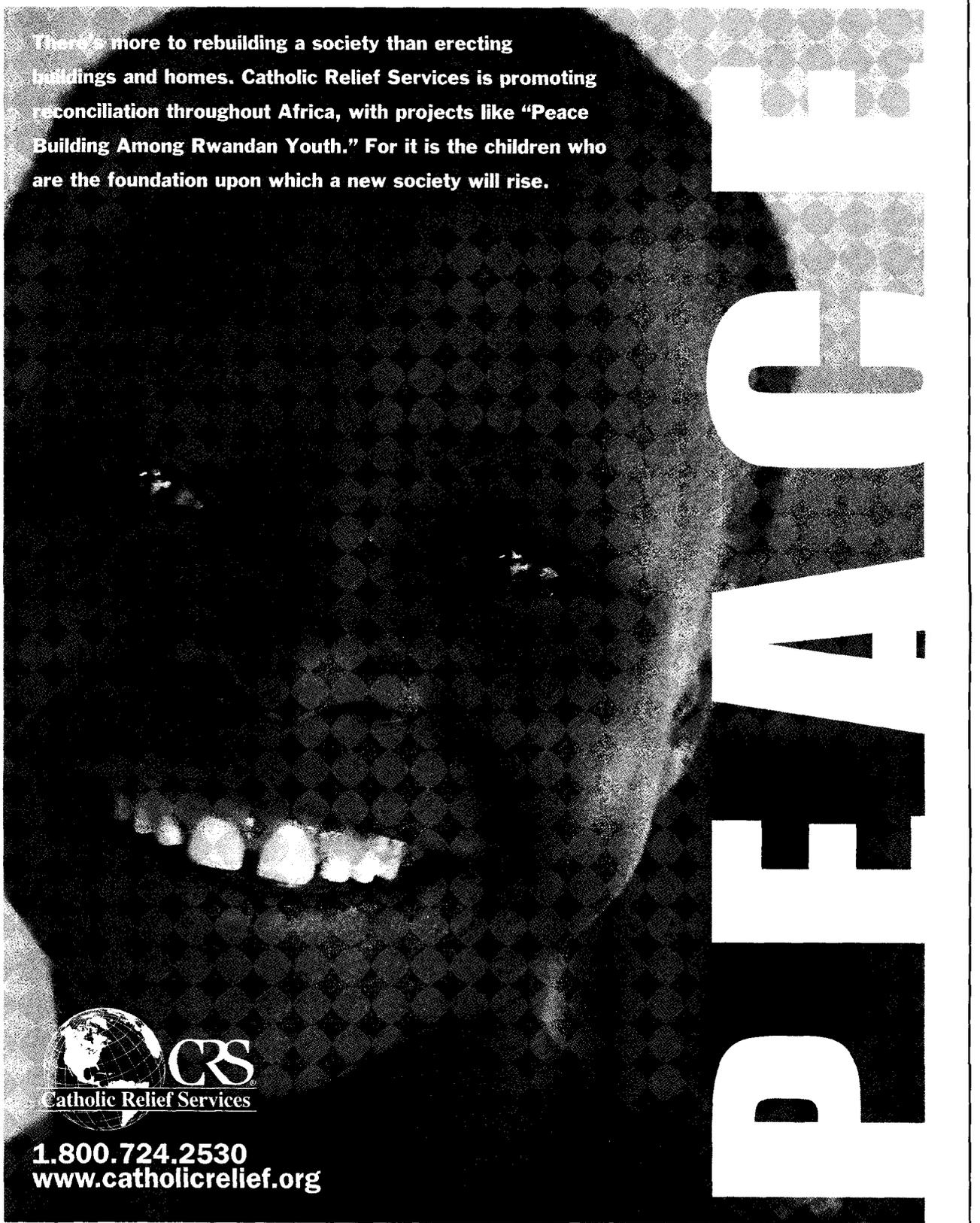
My examples are, of course, drawn from the left end of the Catholic wading pool. There were—and are—Catholics hostile to modernity. But in this too, liberal Catholicism shares something with Modern Orthodoxy. As Freedman chronicles in his book, in recent years the Modern Orthodox movement which flourished with leaders like Soloveitchik has been dwarfed by a more conservative strain of Judaism known as the *haredi*. Many *haredi* immigrated to this country after the war. Their goal, in the words of the sociologist Samuel Heilman, was to "maintain tradition when all about you others do not, to define a world of sacred order when the profane is the order of the day, to assert that change need not occur when all around you has undeniably changed."

That's a familiar battle cry. Conservative Catholics are preaching against a culture of death, declaring that we have learned all there is to learn from modernity and now is the time to sever the connection. The term "liberal" Catholic has become disreputable in many circles, just as—Freedman reports—has the term "Modern Orthodox" in many Jewish circles.

These similarities notwithstanding, liberal Catholicism and Modern Orthodoxy seem to be currently facing two different fates. Despite the influence of the *haredi*, the Modern Orthodox movement has seen a bit of a renaissance with the nomination of Lieberman. (As Merkin put it in the now obligatory Yiddish, Lieberman has given them a "reason to *kvell*.") Liberal Catholics, meanwhile, are scratching their heads over the recent coupling (via beatification) of Pius IX and John XXIII: the pope who resisted modernity versus the one who made it a part of his legacy. But we can take solace in the fact that liberal religion is back in the discussion, thanks in no small part to my senator. □

Maurice Timothy Reidy, *former* Commonweal *editorial assistant, is a reporter for the* Hartford Courant.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED


There's more to rebuilding a society than erecting buildings and homes. Catholic Relief Services is promoting reconciliation throughout Africa, with projects like "Peace Building Among Rwandan Youth." For it is the children who are the foundation upon which a new society will rise.
PEACE
CRS
Catholic Relief Services
1.800.724.2530
www.catholicrelief.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED